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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a study of family day care services for school age children. The study involved telephone and home interviews concerning services provided by a sample of 247 family day care mothers from the Los Angeles area. The paper is divided into two parts. Part I describes the results of the interviews in numerical form and includes short analyses of the results. The chapters in Part I describe the day care arrangements (home descriptions, number and age of children, fees, hours of services, the program provided, summer services, caregiver descriptions, a discussion and survey of opinions on licensing, and a discussion of the supply and demand for day care services. Part II presents case studies of selected family day care mothers and the services they provide for school age children. This section attempts to clarify some of the reasons why women become day care mothers and their goals and feelings about the services they provide. A final chapter describes some of the issues involved in providing day care for school age children and discusses some of the necessary ingredients for providing quality care for this age group. Appendices to the paper include the interview forms, the initial contact letter, a list of tax tips for day care mothers, and a form for rating the day care environment. (BD)

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SCHOOL'S OUT! FAMILY DAY CARE FOR THE SCHOOL AGE CHILD

by Elizabeth Prescott — Cynthia Milich

PS 009795

Pacific Oaks • Pasadena, California

Day Care

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SCHOOLS OUT!

FAMILY DAY CARE FOR THE SCHOOL AGE CHILD

Elizabeth Prescott

Cynthia Milich

Prepared for the Office of Child Development
U.S. Department of Health, Education, and
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We wish to thank all of the people who so generously contributed their time and shared their experiences with us. Without the help of the licensed day care mothers this study would not have been possible. Their willingness to help and their dependable cooperation were invaluable. Also of great help were Daniska Cager and Gloria Sparks of the Department of Public Social Services. They opened many doors for us and patiently explained reams of technical regulations. The consultants in local DPSS offices helped us to compile our master list of licensed caregivers. They also spent much time in answering our questions and sharing their experiences. Yolanda Torres provided much useful input in her role as consultant. The members of WATCH (the Pasadena organization of family day care mothers) let us try out our interview schedule on them and made thoughtful revisions. Much appreciation goes to the other interviewers on this project, Delores Diaz, Pat Soll, and Barbara Fulton. Ede Haselhoef handled all of the data and did many other invaluable things. Elizabeth Jones edited the manuscript, adding greatly to its readability.

We have used various terms to describe the women in our sample -- family day care mother (FDCM), adopted from June Sale and her Community Family Day Care project (1972), provider, or caregiver. We have heard criticism of all of these terms, but have yet to find one that satisfies everyone. The term "carer" has been suggested, but we reject it as too awkward in its written form.

Pacific Oaks College
1975

Elizabeth Prescott
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PART I

CHAPTER I: WHAT WE DID AND WHY

Introduction

Although considerable information on day care services for preschool children now is available, little attention has been given to care for school age children except to note its importance as part of total day care services (Chapman and Lazar, 1971). According to the Westinghouse - Westat report (1971) only 3% of school age children presently are enrolled in known after school care of all sources, although this figure would be somewhat higher for children in kindergarten and the earliest elementary grades. This low incidence of known care for school age children is startling in view of current statistics on maternal employment which state that one-half of the mothers of school age children now are employed (White House Conference Report, 1970).

Accurate data on day care arrangements for school age children are not available. A few are enrolled in center programs; some are latch key children, undoubtedly, many are cared for by relatives or siblings. Surely, some are in family day care. The lack of precise data on out-of-school arrangements for school age children reflects its neglected status as a component of day care services.

In a previous study (Prescott and Milich, 1974), we looked at care for the school age child in day care centers. Though seldom mentioned, care for school age children also occurs in family day care. Family day care can be found in every community. It is the source of approximately four times as much care as is offered by centers. Because this type of care is largely unsupervised, frequently unlicensed, and is often provided by women whose only training has been their own experience with child-rearing, it has been viewed with suspicion. However, despite widespread concern for the quality of family day care, its flexibility has been praised. In family day care children of all ages can be found at almost any hour of the day or night.

Most of the attention which has been given to family day care has focused either on its characteristics as a system for care-giving or on issues of providing quality care for infants and children of preschool age. We do not know of studies which have looked specifically at its ability to provide care for school age children. The major purpose of this report is to look at family day care as a resource for children of school age. Some of the questions which we hope to answer are:

.. Among family day care givers, how widespread is the care of school age children?

.. Are there circumstances which predict its occurrence?

.. Are there conditions which limit its availability?

.. What are the services offered?

.. What can be said about the experiences provided to children, especially as compared to those offered by center programs?

Design of the Study

The Rationale

In thinking about the design of this study we faced a series of unknowns. We had no knowledge about the amount of care which was being provided for school age children, and very little information about the circumstances which might be associated with its occurrence.

Previous studies of family day care contributed to a feeling for the issues which might be involved. Emlen's examination of the neighborhood network (1971a), his study of the caregiver-parent relationship and the importance of the match between them, and his ideas about how the caregiver decides on the number of children she will care for suggested critical dimensions to look at (1971b). The reports of Community Family Day Care project (Sale and Torres, 1972, 1973a; Sale et al, 1973b) provided insights into the reasons why women get into family day care and why some of them stay with it. Also this project corroborated many of Emlen's findings about the importance of the match between the needs of the parent and the caregiver.

Although a family day care home is not a formal organization, some of the approaches, used in studying such organizations seemed useful in providing a conceptual framework. Argyris (1969) has proposed that any organization which is to survive must adapt to its external environment and maintain its internal system. For family day care the external environment includes the needs of the clientele (parents and their children), the requirements imposed by licensing regulations, and social and economic factors such as declining child population, availability of jobs, inflation, etc. Considerations for maintaining a workable internal system include a physical environment which meets the needs of school age children and still provides a good home for family living, and the availability of support systems to the caregiver, such as back-up help, transportation, and access to stimulating activities. The constraints which these realities impose will determine whether a caregiver can maintain her service and also the specific ways in which the service will be offered.

One big difference between a formal organization and a family day care home is the issue of survival. A formal organization exists by virtue of the services or products offered to a clientele and ceases to exist when services or products are no longer provided. A home exists for other purposes, and a service such as family day care can be stopped whenever it no longer pleases the caregiver to continue the service. For this reason the satisfaction of the woman in assuming the caregiving role seems crucial to the long term survival of a family day care setting and to her decision to opt for care of older as opposed to younger children.

It seems plausible that satisfactions with a particular caregiving role depend on how well this role meets the needs of the caregiver. Those needs which relate to maintaining her own family we have considered under the heading of maintaining the internal system. But another important dimension is the emotional fulfillment which the role provides. For some help in thinking about this issue we utilized Erikson's view of the life cycle (1950, 1968). Erikson proposes that growth throughout the life cycle follows a series of developmental stages, each building on the preceding stages and posing tasks or orientations to the world which need to be mastered.

The school age period is viewed as a time of identification with the world of work and development of a sense of industry. For children of this age, the hours out of school need to provide opportunities for (1) developing and discovering skills, (2) using existing skills for doing and making in cooperation with others, (3) taking responsibility and (4) being in close contact with adults who represent good models of the world of work. A primary responsibility for adults during this period is to assist children in discovering their own talents and in gaining a feeling of competence. This role becomes especially important for children who have not found out what they can do in school and may need to discover their competence in skills which the school does not foster.

Erikson also proposes that healthy adults who have married and become parents reach a stage of generativity, in which they become concerned with the fostering of a younger generation. The ability to find a role that justifies and confirms a purpose which goes beyond selfish concerns is considered to be crucial to this stage. Conversely, the inability to sense one's contribution as an important one which goes beyond narrow concerns for self and family is seen as a cause for feelings of stagnation -- the negative aspect of this developmental stage. He has also implied that for any adult the tasks of certain previous developmental stages hold more appeal and/or are less conflictful than those of other stages.

It seemed to us that perhaps an important aspect of the maintenance of a favorable internal system might be the satisfactions which a caregiver found in meeting the needs of children who are in a particular developmental stage. Children who are of school age need adults who take pleasure in task mastery and who are willing to help children with the organizing of people, time, and resources which are required to bring plans to fruition. Adults who find satisfaction in meeting dependency needs of younger children may not find equal satisfaction in working with an older age group.

The considerations which have been described provided some organizing framework for our information-seeking. However, we did opt for open-ended approaches to data collection. This decision made the handling of data difficult, but in an exploratory study such as this, it seemed important to avoid the premature closure of possibilities which could have resulted from using precoded schedules.

The Sample

Because of the difficulties in locating unlicensed care arrangements, this study dealt only with care in licensed family day care homes. At the time of the study there were 2972 licensed family day care homes in Los Angeles County. The county does not maintain a central list of licensed homes. Instead it parcels out the responsibility to 19 district offices. For the purpose of drawing a sample we eliminated two districts where round-trip driving time would exceed two hours and then drew a random sample of 9 districts from the remaining 17. This winnowing process left us with 1604 names on nine lists which represented a good cross section of the diversity found in Los Angeles County. From the 1604 names we selected every fourth name, reducing the list to 401 names. Names for telephone contact were randomly selected from this list until a total of 352 names had produced 73 family day care mothers who had school age children in care.

Of the 352 women who were contacted from our list of 401 names, 31 (or 9%) refused to be interviewed by phone, three more (1%) were not at home for the scheduled home interview and hedged on another appointment. Another 71 (19%) could not be located, even though we contacted the licensing unit to be sure that the address or phone number had not been miscopied.

The Interview Schedule

We had assumed that the list of licensed homes would yield some women who did not currently have children in care, a large number who had only preschool children, and an unpredictable number who did have school age children. To cope with all of these possibilities and to maximize the information from each contact, we developed three interview schedules. Two schedules were designed for telephone contact only, the third for a home visit. In addition, for those with school age children, a summer interview and an activity checklist also were administered (See Appendix A). The interview schedules were tested on a pilot group of women from a Pasadena organization of family day care mothers called WATCH.

Procedures

A letter explaining the purpose of the project was mailed to every license holder prior to a telephone contact (See Appendix B). An interviewer followed up the letter with a phone call. If the woman had no children or no school age children she proceeded with a telephone interview. If the woman had school age children in care, an appointment was made for a home interview.

Four interviewers were used, all with experience in working with family day care mothers. Some interviews were conducted in Spanish. The average home interview lasted about one hour. As a thank you, a brochure discussing income tax deductions for family day care givers was offered (Appendix C).

Within two days of the home interview, those interviewed received another phone call to get information on three activities which the children engaged in on the previous day. All mothers who were interviewed in their homes were interviewed again by phone during late June or early July to ascertain their care-giving arrangements for the summer.

The interviews were coded initially by observers and again by project staff. Information on the reliability of the coding is available upon request from the authors.

The Organization of the Report

This report is divided into two parts. Part I describes the results of our interviews. Unfortunately, the data which need to be reported cannot be easily or succinctly summarized. In our concern for readability, we debated a variety of alternatives for presenting the data. Finally, we settled for simplified tables grouped together by topic for easy skimming. Tests of significance are not presented because they did not seem appropriate. Part II contains case histories and was designed for readers who like their data less numerical and more readable.

CHAPTER II

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

The Logistics of Arrangements

How Common is Care for School Age Children?

The 247 licensed family day care mothers who were interviewed presented the following picture:

	Percent	Number of Mothers
No longer have children in care	25.9%	64
Have only preschool children in care	44.4	110
Have school age children in care	29.7	73
	100%	247

Our experience in finding that 19% of the names in our sample could not be contacted and that among those interviewed 26% no longer had children indicates that a sizeable number of women who do seek a license do not remain active caregivers. Of those who remain active, the ratio of caregiving was 60/40 in favor of preschool only. Of the mothers caring for school age children forty-nine (67%) also had preschool children in their care, leaving twenty-four (33%) who cared for school age only.

What Are the Ages of the Children in Care?

The 73 mothers who were caring for school age children had a total of 298 children in their care, of which 35% (106) were infants and preschool children and 65% (192) were of school age. Since 60% of the family day caregivers reported that they were also caring for siblings of school age children, this accounts for many of the younger children in care.

The breakdown by age for the children cared for by the 73 caregivers looked like this:

Preschool	(N=298)
Under 2 years	12%
Age 2 - 4.9 1/	24
School age	
4.9 - 5 years	15
6 - 8	31
9 - 11	9
12 - 15	3
School age, but exact age unknown	6
	100%

For school age children the breakdown by age appears similar to that found in group care, with the bulk of care provided to children in the primary grades. Family day care appears to provide somewhat more care for older children than group programs officially labeled as day care. The 24 mothers in the sample who care only for school age children report that 22% of their children are nine years or older, a somewhat larger percentage of older children than is found in homes where younger children also are in care 2/.

1/ This cut off point was based on kindergarten enrollment. A child is eligible at 4.9 years depending on the month of birth.

2/ For the population of 192 school age children in care, the percentage by age is as follows: 71% age 8 or younger, 14% age 9 - 11, 5% 12 or older, 10% exact age unknown.

The Duration of the Arrangement

The 192 school age children had been in care for the following length of time:

Number of months	% of children
0 to 6 months	25%
7 to 12	13
13 to 24	17
25 to 48	30
More than 48	15
	100%

Obviously for the nearly one-half of the children who had been in care for two years or more the arrangement was one of considerable stability.

Hours in Care

Family day care mothers reported that they provided daily care for school age children as follows:

Three hours or less	18%
Three to five hours	26
More than five hours	52
Irregular hours	4
	100%

Most children were in care both before and after school (63%). Thirty percent came after school only. Only three percent came only before school.

Are These Neighborhood Children?

In Southern California, it is unusual to be within walking distance of anything. However 38% of the caregivers reported that their school age children did live within walking distance. Another 24% reported that some did and some did not. The remaining 38% answered no.

For most caregivers the school is also within walking distance of their home. Forty-eight percent of caregivers said that children walked to school. The other 52% either took the school bus (8%), or were transported by their own family or by the family day care mother (12%) or used a combination of these (32%).

Cost of Care

Sixty-seven percent of the caregivers reported that they charged a flat weekly fee for service.

Flat rate for service	67% of mothers
$10.00 a week or less	10%
$10.01 - $15.00	25
$15.01 - $20.00	22
$20.01 - $25.00	10
Uses other options	33
	100%

These fees are markedly lower than the rates reported for preschool children. For the younger age 75% of the caregivers reported that they charged at least $20.00 a week (of these 15% charged $25.00 or more).

The remaining 33% of caregivers reported a variety of other options on which they based their charges, including an hourly rate, and a variety of plans for charges when care of siblings also was included.

The Family Day Care Mothers -- Some Statistics on Caregivers

Although many people have raised questions about the quality of family day care, few have looked at random samples of caregivers to see what they were like. We looked at their history of caregiving, family experience, living space, etc.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN LICENSED?

Within last year	4%
1 to 2 years	15
3 to 5 years	38
6 to 10 years	29
Over 10 years	14
	100%

HOW MANY CHILDREN DO YOU HAVE IN YOUR CARE?

	Mothers with school age and preschool children (N=49)	Mothers with school age only (N=24)
Only one child	0%	17%
2 - 3 children	50	44
4 - 5	30	35
6	8	4
Over 7	12	0
	100%	100%

In both groups of caregivers 80% had between two and five children. Care for seven or more seems to be more highly associated with giving of care to preschool children as compared to school age only 3/.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS HAD SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN?

Yes	52%
No	48
	100%

When we asked the question *Do you have children of your own?* we found that all but one of our 73 caregivers was a mother herself. In our larger sample of 110 family day care mothers with preschool children only, 1.0% did not have children of their own. Clearly women who are not mothers themselves seldom are found to have voluntarily sought out family day care .

3/ There is a special license which permits 10 children. Some license holders cared for more than six children but not at any one time. A few apparently had more children in care than the license permits.

DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN OF YOUR OWN?

Mother has no children	1%
One child	12
Two or three	63
Four or five	21
Six or seven	3
	100%

Although the family size for these families of licensed caregivers may be slightly larger than for the population as a whole, the number of really large families was smaller than we had anticipated.

THE AGE RANGE OF THE FAMILY DAY CARE MOTHERS' OWN CHILDREN

	Those who have only preschool (N=110)	Those who have school age children (N=73)
Youngest child is preschool	29%	13%
Youngest child is in elementary school	37	36
Youngest child is in high school	13	24
Youngest child is grown	20	25
No children, not answered	1	2
	100%	100%

HOME - NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS

Lives in a single family house	92%
Single story dwelling	82%
Home is judged to be average in size (1300 or more square feet)	81%
Neighborhood resources judged above average -- good neighborhood, play area, walking distance to some community resources	45%

The housing in which care is provided by this sample is probably fairly typical of that found in urban areas with low population density. These caregivers, with very few exceptions, have an outdoor area which is fenced and easily supervised from inside the house.

Services Which the Family Day Care Mother Provides

It has been reported that family day care provides a wider range of services than are ordinarily found in center care. Centers typically provide an after school snack and a full day program when school is not in session. However, they do not provide care for children who are ill and they close promptly at designated closing time.

DO YOU SERVE MEALS AND SNACKS?

Snacks only	34%
One meal plus snack	37
Two meals plus snack	25
Other	4
	100%

DO CHILDREN COME WHEN SCHOOL IS CLOSED FOR HOLIDAYS?

Yes, all holidays	23%
Yes, except when parent is home	66
No	11
	100%

DO YOU CARE FOR CHILDREN IN THE EVENING, WEEKENDS, OR OVERNIGHT?

Yes	33%
May, as a favor	27
No	40
	100%

IF ILL ON SCHOOL DAYS, CAN CHILDREN STAY IN YOUR HOME?

Yes, ordinarily	88% [4/]
Specific qualification	10
No	2
	100%

DO YOU EVER TAKE CHILDREN TO THE DOCTOR OR DENTIST?

Yes	27%
No	67
Not specified	6
	100%

DO YOU HELP CHILDREN WITH HOMEWORK?

Yes, regularly -- part of the service offered	33%
Yes, occasionally -- if requested	27
No	37
Not specified	3
	100%

This figure on regular help with homework is somewhat higher than reported in group care where regular help was offered in only 24% of the centers.

Relationships With School, Parents

Caregivers for school age children often find themselves involved in a three-way communication system which involves both the parents and the school.

[4/] Here many mothers specified that this depended somewhat on the severity of physical symptons (33%) as well as the physician's recommendations. Twenty-one percent would not take children with a clearly contagious disease in its early stages.

DO YOU HAVE ANY CONTACTS WITH THE SCHOOL THE CHILDREN ATTEND?

Yes, considerable involvement (meets with teachers, participates in PTA, etc.)	19%
Some -- casual contacts related to details of care	25
School initiates contact (calls when child is ill)	41
None	15
	100%

DO PARENTS TALK WITH YOU ABOUT THE SCHOOL?

Yes	59%
No	38
No answer	3
	100%

WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP DO YOU HAVE WITH THE PARENTS?

Close friends -- talk regularly about many things	38%
Friendly, but business-like relationship involves care arrangement only	48
Impersonal -- have little contact	8
No answer	6
	100%

DO YOU TALK WITH PARENTS OFTEN?

Yes, at pick-up time	52%
Yes, set aside a special time, talk on phone	12
Yes, combination -- both pick-up time, phone, or special time	22
Occasionally, but not too often	6
Very seldom or not at all	6
Not known	2
	100%

DO PARENTS ASK FOR YOUR ADVICE?

Yes, often	58%
Occasionally	19
No, never	20
Not specified	3
	100%

NATURE OF ADVICE PARENTS ASK FOR

Schooling	41%
Personal problems	7
Combination	26
Not indicated	26
	100%

DO YOU HAVE ANY PARTICULAR PROBLEMS WITH PARENTS?

Have none	66%
Yes, lack of responsibility (non-payment, don't pick up children on time)	16
Yes, poor communication, personality, attitude, values clash	7
Yes, parent mistreatment or rejection of child	3
Don't now -- used to when began	8
	100%

Regarding Relationship with Parents

Most caregivers describe their relationship with parents as basically warm with frequent contact. A small minority evidently do not have much contact with parents. We have observed in family day care that pick up time is an opportunity for more friendly informative conversations than are seen in large group settings.

Types of Communication About the Initial Arrangement

WHAT ARE THE THINGS THAT PARENTS WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE CARE WHICH YOU GIVE?

Don't ask, don't care	41%
Fees, hours	30%
Details of care (naps, eating, discipline)	13
Special services (irregular hours, keeping children when ill, transportation, help with homework)	7
Activities and facilities (what is there to do)	6
Other -- don't recall	3
	100%

WHAT ARE THE THINGS YOU MOST WANT PARENTS TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT THE CARE YOU OFFER?

Care of child (i.e. wants them clean, that I treat them like my own, etc.)	60%
Professional role -- tells parents what she expects of them	23
Details of arrangement (fees, hours, pick-up on time)	12
Not indicated	5
	100%

In summary, family day care for school age children appears to occur less frequently than care for preschool children; however, it cannot be judged infrequent. Most arrangements appear to be neighborhood focused; older children often walk to public school and their younger siblings are in care in the same home. Often these care arrangements have existed since the child's preschool years. Caregivers typically offer a wide range of services to fit a particular working mother's needs. Caregivers report that parents typically do not ask many questions about the care when making an arrangement, but that most arrangements are characterized by regular communication and friendly relationships.

CHAPTER III

THE "PROGRAM" -- HOW CHILDREN SPEND THEIR TIME IN FAMILY DAY CARE

We asked family day care mothers a series of questions about how children spent their time, and about the initiative which the family day care mother takes in planning and providing activities. In response to our questions, they gave the following answers:

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE TYPICAL THINGS YOUR CHILDREN DO?

Sports	23%
Crafts	15
Games (cards, checkers, etc.)	14
Dramatic play	12
Listening to TV, records	12
Eating, sleeping, etc.	10
Fooling around	5
Homework or academic activities	5
Practicing skills, piano, etc.	3
Continuing projects	1
	100%

DO YOU CELEBRATE HOLIDAYS, BIRTHDAYS, ETC?

Yes, birthdays only	32%
Yes, birthdays and holidays	41
Yes, unusual events as well	7
No, none of these	15
Unanswered	5
	100%

DO THE CHILDREN HAVE SPECIAL CHORES OR SPECIAL THINGS TO DO?

Yes	22%
Qualified yes	47
No	31
	100%

DO YOU TAKE THE CHILDREN WITH YOU ON ERRANDS OR TRIPS?

Neighborhood (grocery stores, bank, bakery, etc.)	62%
Into the community, beach, museum, hiking, picnicking, etc.	22
No	14
No answer	2
	100%

HOW MUCH TIME DO THEY SPEND LOOKING AT TV?

Usually two or more hours	10%
About 1 - 1½ hours	38
About one-half hour	40
None	5
Situational (depends on weather)	7
	100%

DO CHILDREN BRING THEIR OWN EQUIPMENT AND PLAYTHINGS?

Yes	48%
Yes, qualified (occasionally, if willing to share)	26
No, children don't ask	10
No, FDCM doesn't permit	16
	100%

OBSERVER'S JUDGMENT OF AMOUNT OF EQUIPMENT [1]

Saw none	8%
Minimal amount	4
Average amount	40
More than average	29
A great deal	12
No answer	7
	100%

Observers saw a wide range of equipment including things like microscopes, piano, organ, a huge Lego set, tools, erector sets, swimming pools, a doll house with lights and water, skates, an attic full of props, etc. Because there are so few children in any given home, the amount of things available to each child often appeared very generous.

DO YOUR CHILDREN PARTICIPATE IN AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, SCOUTING, ETC?

Yes, regularly	6%
Yes, individual activities (baseball, music lessons)	34
No	58
No answer	2
	100%

DO OTHER CHILDREN COME HERE TO PLAY?

Yes	59%
No	34
No answer	7
	100%

OBSERVER'S RATING OF CHILDREN'S FREEDOM OF CHOICE ON WHERE TO PLAY

No choice by children -- they all stay in a particular room or yard chosen by adult	3%
Some choice -- some rooms or yards may be off limits but children have free choice among remainder	34
High choice - children have freedom to move among all indoor and outdoor space	59
No answer	4
	100%

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[1] We do not have figures on reliability of observer's ratings; however, our previous experience with such ratings leads us to believe that they are not wildly inaccurate.

DO YOUR CHILDREN PLAY AT HOMES OF OTHER CHILDREN

Yes	18%
Yes, with limits -- I must know their whereabouts at all times	25
No, my license doesn't permit	10
No, I don't permit	44
No answer	3
	100%

DO YOUR CHILDREN GO TO THE PARKS

Yes	10%
Yes, with limits -- I must know their whereabouts at all times	16
No, my license doesn't permit	11
No, I don't permit	63
	100%

This last group of tables is indicative of the diversity which we found among homes. Some offered very little in the way of program. In these homes children were supervised for the few hours after school, but the caregiver did not attempt to provide much in the way of activities. Other caregivers thought of the after school time as a valuable play period and gave considerable thought to the provision of a rich environment.

A Comparison of Children's Activities in Homes and in Centers

We had hoped to get some comparative data on the way children spend their time in homes and centers. It became apparent early in the study that we could not count on observing children at the time of the home interview. Family day care mothers typically wanted to schedule their interview for the quietest time of the day, and that time was often early afternoon or morning. To get some idea of activities on a given day we arranged to call back and get a description of children's activities on the afternoon immediately following the interview. We do not know how well this report compares to a scheduled observation, nor do we consider it an accurate comparison to observations of center care. However, the table below shows several differences between home and center which we guess are probably accurate:

FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE OF ACTIVITIES IN CENTERS AND IN FAMILY DAY CARE HOMES 2/

	Center (N=1287)	Homes (N=300)		Center (N=1287)	Homes (N=300)
OUT OF ACTIVITY			FULL RANGE ACTIVITY		
In transition	6%	3%	Academic homework	1%	7%
Self care	4	8	Doing work	5	4
Horsing around	4	2	Exploring	7	7
Watching	2	1	Construction with commercial props	2	3
Restriction	2	0	Arts and crafts	12	4
Other	2	1	Sports	18	13
LIMITED ACTIVITY			Games	11	6
Watching TV or movies	1	11	Dramatic play	9	15
Eating as an activity	3	8	Music, dance	2	0
Reading	2	2			
Listening	1	1	Legitimate no answer	0	4
Conversation, discussion	6	0		100%	100%

2/ Frequency in centers is observed for one day. Frequency in home is caregiver's report for one day.

We think that the areas of real difference are watching TV, doing academic homework, and engaging in dramatic play, all of which appear to be higher in homes. Since arts and crafts are a very common activity in any center program, this activity probably does occur with greater frequency at centers.

The areas which are most difficult to assess are those which involve eating and conversation, the kinds of non-specific relaxing-lounging around which occur in homes. These activities are much more a part of the fabric of homes rather than centers. Because of this they may be mentioned with less frequency and perhaps are not even comparable to activities bearing similar labels in center programs.

What About the Program in Home Settings?

Clearly the homes in which we interviewed offered a range of program possibilities. In perhaps 10 - 25% of the homes the caregivers appeared to take little initiative in planning activities such as special events, taking children on trips, encouraging participation in after school activities. Another group, representing probably 50 - 75% of the caregivers, appeared to plan a range of activities, special events, and trips for children.

When we observed school age children in centers we found that often the program was pretty much restricted to the social group and activities which could be offered within the confines of the center. A fairly sizeable proportion of family day care givers uses the resources of the neighborhood and the larger community to provide activities for children. Those caregivers who show little initiative and expect children to amuse themselves within the confines of the home may provide a restricted unstimulating setting for children of school age.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMERTIME

When we called back in the summer we found that 42% (31) of the women we had interviewed in the spring were no longer caring for the school age children they had in care during the school year. The remaining 58% (42) were still caring for school age children and had a total of 110 children in their care. Ninety-five percent of the family day care mothers stated that the children now in care would be there all summer except for vacation time with parents. These 24 caregivers had lost 20 of their children cared for during the school year and had gained 12 new children. It appears that relatively few mothers seek out family day care at the beginning of the summer. The beginning of the school year in September appears to be the time when most arrangements are made.

WILL THE CHILDREN BE WITH YOU ALL SUMMER?

Yes, except for vacation with parents	95%
No	2
No answer	3
	100%

What Do They Do All Day

For many children in family day care, as in center care, the advent of summer doesn't really change their schedule that much; it is school as usual.

DO ANY OF YOUR CHILDREN GO TO SUMMER SCHOOL?

Yes, all do	48%
Some do, some don't	17
No	35
	100%

(When children go to summer school)
NUMBER OF HOURS CHILDREN ARE WITH FAMILY DAY CARE MOTHERS

Three hours	31%
Four hours	28
Five hours	34
Irregular, varies from week to week and part-time	7
	100%

(When children go to summer school)
TIME OF DAY CHILDREN ARE WITH FAMILY DAY CARE MOTHER

Come before school only	14%
After school only	39
Both before and after school	33
Spends part of the time in another setting	11
Combination of the above	3
	100%

(When children are not in summer school)

NUMBER OF HOURS CHILDREN ARE WITH FAMILY DAY CARE MOTHER

Six to seven hours	4%
Eight to nine hours	44
Ten or more hours	52
	100%

Attendance at summer school cuts down on the number of hours spent in the family day care home, and hence (usually) on the cost of care for the parent.

Fees and Services

Since almost all of the children in summer care had also been in care during the winter we found that answers to questions about logistics and basic services remained much the same. Fees did change somewhat, although the cost of summer care seemed like a bargain rate compared to charges during the school year.

	Winter	Summer
$10.00 a week or less	10%	12%
$10.01 - $15.00	25	24
$15.01 - $20.00	22	31
$20.01 - $25.00	10	19
Over $25.00	0	7
Use other option	33	7
	100%	100%

Many family day care mothers make good use of the community and its facilities for h[illegible] in planning summer activities for school age children.

DO YOU USE COMMUNITY RESOURCES?

City parks, recreation programs (swimming, crafts)	36%
Use a combination (parks, libraries, YMCA, etc.)	12
Would (too difficult with wide age range, too large group)	12
No	38
No answer	2
	100%

DO THE CHILDREN TAKE SWIMMING OR OTHER KINDS OF LESSONS?

Yes	29%
Some do, some don't	7
No	52
Not now, have in past	12
	100%

DO YOU PLAN ANYTHING SPECIAL LIKE TRIPS, CAMPOUTS (Different from winter program)?

Neighborhood (grocery stores, banks, bakers)	14%
Community (beach, museum, Disneyland)	7
Special (hiking, horseback, picnics, movies)	14
All of the above	14
No	48
Information not available	3
	100%

DO YOU REQUIRE SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN TO HAVE A REST OR QUIET TIME?

Family day care mother requires rest time	31%
Yes, if parent requests rest time	5
Yes, by children's choice	12
Requires quiet time (look at books or play quiet games)	17
No rest requirement	31
Had no answer	4
	100%

Activities on a Typical Day

On the day following our summer interview we called back to find out what three activities the children had engaged in during the previous day. The answers which family day care mothers gave are compared to those which we observed in centers.

FREQUENCY OF ACTIVITIES IN FAMILY DAY CARE HOMES AS COMPARED TO GROUP PROGRAMS 1/

	FDC Homes Summer (N=126)	Summer-only Programs (N=355) 2/	Summer Centers (N=472)
OUT OF ACTIVITY			
In transition	0%	10%	6%
Self-care	0	2	5
Horsing around	5	0	3
Watching	0	2	2
Restriction	0	0	1
Other	1	3	2
LIMITED ACTIVITY			
Watching TV or movies	10	1	0
Eating as an activity	7	1	0
Reading	8	3	1
Listening	0	4	2
Conversation, discussion	1	4	4
FULL RANGE ACTIVITY			
Academic homework	4	5	1
Doing work	3	5	7
Exploring	4	5	6
Construction with commercial props	2	3	2
Arts and crafts	11	16	14
Sports	25	18	16
Games	7	15	15
Dramatic play	6	1	11
Music, dance	1	2	2
Legitimate no answer	5	0	0
	100%	100%	100%

1/ Frequencies in group programs are observed on one day, home frequencies are reported for one day.

2/ Includes summer school, organized recreation programs, day camps, etc.

Again, the reader should interpret these data with care. It appears likely that both reading and television watching occur more often in home settings. Whether other differences are significant, given the method of obtaining information, seems doubtful.

How Family Day Care Mothers View Summer

When asked about summer many of the family day care mothers gave answers similar to those given by teachers in group programs. The long hot days were seen as relaxing, unpressured and sometimes long and boring.

DO YOU HAVE ADDITIONAL COSTS?

For food, extra meals	31%
Recreation or other fees	5
Transportation	5
Other expenses (water, electricity, equipment)	2
Combination of the above	9
No -- mother provides food, other snacks	48
	100%

DO YOU HAVE TO ARRANGE FOR ADDITIONAL HELP?

Yes	5%
Yes, sometimes (depends on size of group and availability of help)	5
No	88
No answer	2
	100%

DO YOU HAVE TO CHANGE YOUR ROUTINE?

No, stays the same (*I'm always with the children anyway*)	67%
Spend more time with the children, more direct involvement as supervision required	17
Household routine altered	10
Less personal freedom	2
Depends on number of children -- for 2, no for 5 or 6, yes	2
Other	2
	100%

WHAT ARE THE MOST DIFFICULT THINGS?

Nothing	40%
Hot weather (children get tired)	10
More work and added responsibility	17
Cost more -- food and interruption for vacation arrangements	5
Children get bored and tired -- they miss school activities	12
Less personal freedom for FDCM	5
Interferes with own family life	7
Information not available	4
	100%

WHAT ARE THE BEST THINGS?

More relaxed, casual, less pressure, more free play time for children, less having to stay on schedule	36%
None really (*Just part of our lives*)	26
More satisfying (children there longer, get to know them better)	17
Longer daylight hours, children outside more	14
No answer	7
	100%

It appears that the caregivers who provided little more than supervision during the winter were most likely not to continue caregiving in the summer. Given the large number of children who attend summer school, the caregiving arrangement for many children was not markedly altered during the summer.

CHAPTER V

A LOOK AT THE CAREGIVERS

We have already described caregivers as women who have children of their own (often older or grown), living in a single family house with a fenced yard. Now we will look at some of the things which make their lives more (or less) workable, such as support systems, costs, their own attitudes toward family day care and the training which they have found useful.

A Support System

Most family-based systems work better if there is some support system to fall back on when something unexpected happens or at times when adults need an opportunity to do adult things without the perpetual presence of children. We asked a series of questions about the availability of support systems.

DO YOU HAVE ANYONE TO HELP YOU?

Relative, husband	38%
Has licensed back up -- a formally licensed family day care mother	7
Unlicensed friend	7
Has no help	36
Other	10
No comment	2
	100%

DO YOU HAVE ANYONE TO HELP YOU WHEN YOU ARE SICK OR HAVE TO GO ON ERRANDS?

	Mothers who have only preschool (N=110)	Mothers who have school age (N=73)
Friend, neighbor	24%	15%
Relative, husband	20	29
Licensed family day care mother	17	12
Call parent who arranges a fill-in	12	14
Never get sick	7	12
Have no one, just keep going	13	15
No answer	7	3
	100%	100%

DO YOU HAVE ANYONE TO HELP YOU WHEN YOU GO ON VACATIONS?

	Mothers who have only preschool (N=110)	Mothers who have school age (N=73)
Tell parents ahead of time to make other plans	34%	40%
Friends, neighbors, relatives take children	31	14
Discuss with parents who help find a substitute	12	11
Don't go, never take a vacation	8	16
This is a problem, have found no solution	6	3
Arrange own vacation to coincide with the families of children	5	12
Other	2	2
No answer	2	2
	100%	100%

DO YOU BELONG TO ANY KIND OF ORGANIZATION THAT IS HELPFUL IN YOUR DAY CARE?

	Mothers who have only preschool (N=[illegible])	Mothers who have school age (N=73)
Yes	22%	Information not Available
Used to, don't anymore	7	
No	71	
	100%	

DO YOU HAVE SOMEONE TO TALK OVER YOUR DAY CARE PROBLEMS WITH?

	Mothers who have only preschool (N=110)	Mothers who have school age (N=73)
DPSS Consultant	27%	11%
No one	20	19
Have no problems, don't need anyone	12	14
Another licensed FDCM	12	6
Parents	10	10
Relative, husband	7	23
Unlicensed sitter	6	10
Professional (Dr., etc.)	4	4
No answer	2	3
	100%	100%

Many of these women apparently have found or developed support systems. Apparently, others still have no good solutions. It appeared to us that women who participated in social networks which also gave them some built-in supports were often more competent and had a larger repertoire of skills than those women who did not have such networks.

Cost of Giving Care

One way in which family day care is strikingly different from center care, especially center care which must operate without subsidy, is the amount of time which goes into evaluating costs. As the Family Day Care Project (Sale, et al., 1973b) learned, any attempt to cost-account family day care is a push into unfamiliar territory. Our informants were quite vague about costs, even though we were interviewing at the peak of the inflationary cycle when even the most cost-resistant homemaker was being forced to look at income vs outgo.

On the other hand, despite disclaimers about knowledge of costs, well over half of them knew about income tax deductions for expenses incurred as a family day care giver. Clearly, one of the ways in which family day care can augment family income is through the tax deductions for use of one's home. Even a woman who earns relatively little as a family day care giver may be ahead financially compared to the salary she would earn outside the home with additional costs for her own day care expenses and no tax break.

HAVE YOU ANY IDEA OF THE COST TO YOU OF TAKING CARE OF A SCHOOL AGE CHILD (BY WEEK)?

Yes	8%
Vaguely	25
No	64
Didn't wish to answer	3
	100%

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT INCOME TAX DEDUCTIONS?

Yes	62%
No	32
Didn't wish to answer	6
	100%

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR BIGGEST EXPENSE IS?

Food	48%
Equipment	10
Trips, advertising, medicine	2
Don't know, never thought about it	40
	100%

WHAT DO YOU USE FOR TRANSPORTATION?

Private car	75%
Walk	8
Combination	6
Other	11
	100%

DID YOU HAVE TO GET SOME SPECIAL INSURANCE?

Yes	15%
No, or don't drive [1]	85
	100%

The Caregiver -- Attitude and Preferences

We wanted to know more about how our caregivers felt about caring for children of school age as compared to younger children. It seemed that information about likes, preferences, and dislikes would give us some idea about the rewards which stem from providing care.

WHICH AGE CHILD DO YOU LIKE BETTER -- SCHOOL AGE OR YOUNGER?

Younger	55%
School age	15
Depends on child	4
Don't care	26
	100%

HOW DO SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN GET ALONG WITH YOUNGER CHILDREN?

Fine, just like a family	59%
OK, conflicts but manageable	25
Not well, fights and teasing	4
Don't play together, older children ignore younger children	6
No comment	6
	100%

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[1] Often answered that a relative, neighbor, or husband sometimes drove them.

IS ONE AGE EASIER OR MORE DIFFICULT THAN THE OTHERS? WHY?

Younger easier -- babies stay put, younger more more manageable, will accept authority	27%
Younger harder -- tie you down, especially babies who get into things	10
Older easier -- they can help FDCM with younger children, teach them things, give FDCM more time	10
Older harder -- they are independent, won't accept authority, too active, too much responsibility	22
Depends on fit, age of own children	10
No preference	16
Did not answer	5
	100%

ARE THERE ANY PARTICULARLY GOOD THINGS THAT RESULT FROM OLDER AND YOUNGER CHILDREN BEING TOGETHER?

Yes, older help FDCM care for younger	18%
Yes, older learn patience	22
Yes, both learn social skills	25
Yes, younger learn cognitive skills	22
No	6
No comment	7
	100%

ARE THERE ANY PROBLEMS WHICH THEIR BEING TOGETHER CAUSES?

Yes, younger learn bad habits	8%
Yes, conflict from teasing, younger get hurt	16
Yes, two age groups have different interests	10
No	56
No comment	10
	100%

WHAT IS THE OLDEST CHILD YOU WOULD TAKE?

Five to seven years old	22%
Eight to ten	19
Eleven to thirteen	25
Fourteen to sixteen	10
Any age I'm asked	16
No answer, uncertain	8
	100%

WHAT IS THE OLDEST CHILD YOU HAVE EVER HAD?

Five to seven years old	27%
Eight to ten	29
Eleven to thirteen	33
Fourteen to sixteen	8
Older than sixteen	1
No answer	2
	100%

The Good and Bad Aspects of Family Day Care

WHAT ARE THE THINGS YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT DOING FAMILY DAY CARE?

Love children, exciting, relieves boredom	26
Enjoy watching children grow, develop	18
Being able to be home	18
Instant family --*filling own nest*, companionship for self	18
Knowing I can help someone else	8
Companionship for own children	4
Income, monetary rewards	1
Social contact with parents as friends	1
Other	6
	100%

WHAT ARE THE MAIN DIFFICULTIES?

No problems	46%
Parents have different value system; irresponsible, hard to work with	16
Children's behavior	11
Not being paid	9
Limits your freedom	3
Parents don't place high priority value on good care for children	1
No comment	14
	100%

HAVE YOU HAD EXPERIENCES OR TRAINING THAT HAVE HELPED YOU PROVIDE GOOD CARE?

	Mothers who have only preschool (N=110)	Mothers who have school age (N=73)
Personal parenting experience, raising own family	47%	38%
Practical experience, did a lot of baby sitting	16	23
Professional training, course work	11	16
Personal characteristics, common sense	7	8
Came from large extended family	7	8
Other	6	4
Did not have answer	6	3
	100%	100%

In centers many of the teachers are young women who have not yet had children of their own. Often they have more professional training than practical experience with children. Family day care is markedly different in this respect. These women are parents and often have a long history of practical experience in dealing with children. Although professionals may disagree, family day care mothers clearly value their direct experience with children.

A Look at Some Predictive Relationships

Although we cannot present impressive tables showing clear relationships among clusters of variables there were three variables which seemed predictive of a cluster of relationships. These three were (1) number of years licensed, (2) degree of initiative, and (3) preference for children of school age.

Number of Years Licensed

As this study progressed it became apparent that women who continued to give care over the years found more ways to cope with problems and also appeared more willing and able to meet parent's needs. Among our sample of women caring for school age children, 4% had been licensed for one year or less, 15% had been licensed from one to three years and 81% had held their license for more than three years. Those who had held their license for more than three years had the following characteristics as compared to caregivers who had been licensed for less than three years.

.. Obtained children through word of mouth (i.e., reputation in neighborhood.)
.. Would take children eleven and older
.. Would care for special needs children
.. Insist that parent understand their professional role
.. Parents often ask for advice
.. School age and younger children get along fine together
.. Often take children on trips
.. Would take children to doctor or dentist
.. Children seldom watch TV
.. Children have definite chores
.. Has much contact with elementary school
.. Takes a vacation
.. Has backup help from other licensed caregivers
.. Knows about income tax deductions
.. Does not find licensing helpful.

Degree of Initiative

There were some questions which seemed to indicate the degree of energy and initiative which the caregiver was willing to invest in the children under her care. One question which appeared especially useful in sorting out caregivers was one which asked whether they celebrated birthdays, special events and encouraged children to participate in after school activities and special events. Eleven percent of our sample did none of these things, 53% usually provided some type of birthday celebration, 36% provided birthday parties, trips, special events, and other activities outside the home.

Caregivers who provided parties, special events etc. also rated high on the following characteristics. Those who reported that they did not plan parties or special events rated low.

.. Likes school age children
.. Has older children (eleven years or older)
.. Takes children week ends and overnight
.. Will take if mother works irregular hours
.. Takes children to doctor or dentist
.. Has special chores for children to do
.. Children bring own playthings
.. Has close relationship with parents
.. Talks often with mothers
.. Has contacts with school
.. Has backup help
.. Does not find licensing helpful
.. Does family day care for personal satisfaction, loves children.

There is a good deal of overlap in our measure of initiative and number of years licensed. It is our feeling that women who remain active caregivers over the years usually also display a good deal of initiative. This, in and of itself, does seem to be a quality worthy of attention, predictive of satisfaction and delight in the caregiving role.

Preference for School Age Children

Another dimension which seemed predictive of satisfaction with the caregiving role for school age children was a real enjoyment of this age group. Sixteen percent of our sample preferred children of school age, as compared to 58% who definitely preferred younger children and another 26% who said they didn't care. Those who preferred school age children reported that:

.. Their children spent one-half hour a day or less watching TV
.. That other children came to the house to play
.. That their children played at other children's homes.
.. They have room for more school age children
.. That they do special things with their school age children
.. They take children on trips in the community
.. That school age children are easier to care for than younger children
.. That school age children tie them down less.

Caregivers who like school age children appear to differ in certain caregiving practices and attitudes from those women who prefer younger children. For some caregivers, children of school age make their lives work better -- especially in the sense that one is not tied so closely to the house and can have the freedom to go out either while children are in school or with children on trips.

Although our data are often skimpy they suggest to us that long time caregivers have found a mode of operation which is satisfying both to them and to their clients. The role of school age caregiver may be put together in a variety of ways. It can include school age children because they were in care as preschoolers even though the caregiver does not particularly care for this age, or it can be built around the interests and needs of school age children. To some extent, it can be a high or low energy role, depending on the number of children in care, their age and the kind of support system available.

In the next sections we will look at licensing and some of the ways in which the community regulates its supply and demand for caregivers.

CHAPTER VI

THE LICENSING PROCESS

Traditionally, family day care has been included among the services to children which require licensing. Often it has had a much lower priority than licensing of group care or 24 hour foster care. Recently Norris Class (1972) and others have questioned the advisability or effectiveness of licensing procedures and have suggested alternatives which are more flexible, such as registration. Because it seemed important to find out how our informants felt about the process, we asked a series of questions about their experience with licensing.

Some Background Information on Licensing Regulations and Procedures

Basic Licensing Procedures

At the time of these interviews the licensing of family day care in California was administered by the County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) according to a long standing subvention arrangement with the state licensing agency (formerly the Department of Social Welfare, now the Department of Health), which licenses all forms of institutional care for children. The major responsibility of the Department of Public Social Services is the administration of the welfare system. This onerous responsibility tends to reduce the licensing function to a very peripheral and insignificant service within the department.

Because licensing occupies such a minor role, assignment to this function does not appear to be popular with department staff. It is not only a lowly job within the grade and pay structure, but being so peripheral, it is not a good place to curry the attention that leads to career advancement. Turnover among workers typically is very high 1/.

At the time of our study, the initial step in acquiring a mandatory license was a call to the Los Angeles County Department of Social Services Foster Home licensing section, which then mailed to the potential day caregiver a packet containing a dozen or so forms along with a cover letter instructing the applicant to:

1) Complete the Foster Home application form.

   Forms in the packet include: a) a brief supplemental statement concerning physical and mental health (for all adults in the household) to be filled out by the caregiver; b) a financial statement, covering estimated, detailed monthly income and expenses of household; c) floor plan of home; d) non-discrimination form; e) choice of day care license (0 to 6 years or 3 to 16 years); f) back-up caregiver reference for emergencies; g) swimming pool and dangerous weapons agreement.

2) Have skin tests or chest x-rays taken at a health center (required of all adult members of the household).

3) Make arrangements to have fingerprints taken at Sheriff's Station or Police Department (all adults in household) 2/.

4) Mail all of the above materials within ten days.

Those applicants who completed the forms, including requests for date and place of marriage, statement of income, arrest record, and personal references; the fees; and the trips to various health and law enforcement agencies to satisfy test requirements, were then technically ready for the next step. A Foster Home licensing worker was then sent to interview the applicant and spouse in the home. The purpose of this interview, a licensing administrator pointed out, was primarily to check out the physical features, such as vented heaters, fencing, sleeping areas (a bed is required for each child, regardless of age or hours spent in the home): 3/

1/ With the tightening of the job market, this may change. It is no longer true of workers who license group care facilities.

2/ *The fee for each fingerprint card*, a 1972 letter noted, *is $3.80; This fee is not refundable.*

3/ This requirement usually is inappropriate for school age children. Apparently some licensors overlook it -- others do not.

> *We are concerned about physical dangers, much as a fire inspector is. We look at play equipment and furniture, such things as loose rugs, polished floors and marble and glass tables. The principle of close scrutiny of physical surroundings is very important.*

A second interview, the "social study", was conducted on a second visit to determine the caregiver's history and feelings, but emphasis is clearly placed on the first inspection, the checking out of physical features; it is basically the facility, not the caregiver, which is licensed 4/.

When all of these steps have been taken, notes the cover letter cheerfully, after submission of x-ray and finger print cards, fees and paperwork, and completion of interviews, *it will not be too long before you hear about the decision*, a time-span an official spokesman saw as approximately 60 days. In practice, this statement appears to be optimistic. The average wait, at the time of our study, appeared to be three to six months; not infrequently, the time period was extended up to a year. Each year the license has to be renewed with another visit, new forms and up-dated tests. Since the licensing worker is often also a new one, it is almost like starting from scratch.

The DPSS Consultant Program

When we began this study, the Department of Social Services also offered a Day Care Consultant program in addition to the licensing function. This program was staffed by personnel in each of the area offices who provided services in referral information, recruitment, and retention of licensed family day care homes. The consultant conducted the group "pre-app" orientation meetings, to which potential family day care givers were invited, and provided input after licensing -- visiting homes, helping mothers with problems, putting on craft workshops and holiday get-togethers, making referrals and, in the days when department policy permitted, actively recruiting new homes. Unfortunately, this was curtailed in 1974 due, according to the director of Social Services, to a $9.7 million dollar funding deficit.

How Caregivers View Licensing

As indicated elsewhere, the majority of the caregivers in this sample had been licensed three or more years, so they had accumulated considerable experience with the licensing function. We asked all the licensed caregivers that we interviewed about their experiences with licensing. Their answers are reported separately although differences among types of caregivers appear minimal.

HOW DID YOU FIND OUT YOU HAD TO BE LICENSED?

	Mothers who have no children (N=64)	Mothers who have only preschool (N=110)	Mothers who have school age (N=73)
Turned in by someone	7%	8%	16%
Read in newspaper	11	16	22
Tried to place an ad in the newspaper and was told I had to be licensed	9	9	0
Friend told me	28	39	37
Client was required to use a licensed facility	6	2	7
So long ago, I don't recall	14	9	3
Other reasons 5/	22	14	16
Didn't answer	3	3	0
	100%	100%	100%

4/ There appeared to be a great deal of leeway in interpretation and implementation of department policy; while the licensing supervisor in one area indicated the husband need not be interviewed at home, as was the requirement with foster care, a family day care mother in another area told us her husband was required to take time out from work to be interviewed at home, even though the worker had seen and spoken with him in their home on the first visit.

These answers indicate that a sizeable number of licensees did not know about licensing until they were reported or until they were rejected in placing an ad or making an arrangement because they did not have a license.

HAVE YOU FOUND LICENSING HELPFUL?

	Mothers who had no children (N=64)	Mothers who have only preschool (N=110)	Mothers who have school age (N=73)
Yes, helps get children	17%	20%	20%
Yes, makes parents feel more secure	3	14	12
Yes, insures safety of children	6	3	7
Yes, can advertise in paper	3	4	7
Yes, makes me feel more secure	22	16	16
Really makes no difference	9	9	10
Other	6	6	6
No, it is not helpful	34	28	22
	100%	100%	100%

REASON FOR LICENSING NOT BEING HELPFUL

	Mothers who had no children (N=64)	Mothers who have only preschool (N=110)	Mothers who have school age (N=73)
No guarantee of good care	11%	11%	7%
A hassle (technical problems, too much paper work	8	6	10
Inefficient, inadequate referral system	6	3	1
Workers ineffective, not qualified, too authoritarian	3	6	7
Just not helpful	14	16	15
Thought licensing helpful	58	58	60
	100%	100%	100%

HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT THE LICENSING PROCESS ITSELF?

	Mothers who had no children (N=64)	Mothers who have only preschool (N=110)	Mothers who have school age (N=73)
Fine (unqualified fine	16%	26%	12%
OK -- no real feelings, one way or other	22	26	43
A hassle, but necessary	30	26	29
A hassle, but unnecessary	14	12	7
Hated it; unnecessarily expensive, time and energy consuming	13	7	8
No comment	5	3	1
	100%	100%	100%

5/ There were a variety of other answers such as: *At a meeting of my own child's public school. ...Learned of licensing from my own children's sitter. ...Got cheated out of money and needed a license to be able to go to small claims court. ...Ran a foster home for babies. ...Wanted insurance. ...A class entitled "Family Day Care - How To'. ...My day care consultant told me. ...Through a television program. ...Welfare told me. ...You have to have a license for everything you do -- so I just knew and inquired.*

REASON FOR FEELINGS ABOUT THE LICENSING PROCESS

	Mothers who had no children (N=64)	Mothers who have only preschool (N=110)	Mothers who have school age (N=73)
Too much red tape, x-ray, fingerprinting, much time and energy consuming	25%	22%	37%
Takes too long	22	18	12
Workers ineffective, questions, visits useless and insulting. Workers not qualfied, no experience with children, turn over enormous	6	7	10
Unrealistic regulations (physical facilities) fire inspection, children not allowed in kitchen	0	2	1
Necessary for children's protection	9	9	10
Shows proof of FDCM's good intentions	5	3	6
No negative feelings -- believe it is fine	31	38	24
	100%	100%	100%

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEAS HOW IT MIGHT BE CHANGED?

	Mothers who had no children (N=64)	Mothers who have only preschool (N=110)	Mothers who have school age (N=73)
Get rid of bureaucratic red tape, paper work, expensive procedures	19%	10%	21%
Do away with arbitrary and unrealistic restrictions, such as age groupings, number of children, recognize the competence of caregiver	6	19	35
Be more strict about quality of care, more unanounced visits, check on what's happenning but don't tell FDCM what to do	16	13	6
Need more qualified, knowledgeable workers, less turnover, more personal contact in non-authoritarian role	8	6	4
Use FDCM as an advisory board, self-regulating professional group to provide input	0	2	3
Develop more efficient referral system	5	3	0
Other	6	9	4
No recommendations	22	39	24
	100%	100%	100%

By far the most negative reactions were to the fingerprinting for the police check and to the x-ray, both which often required the spouse to take time off from his job, and to the amount of time necessary to complete the process. Personnel within the department confirmed these as problem areas.

In regard to the length of time to obtain a license department (DPSS) consultants gave a series of reasons and examples. *At one time, an addressograph machine breakdown left 600 applications in the out basket.* Administrative hang-ups such as *lost correspondence in Sacramento, closed health centers, licensing workers' turn-over, vacations and heavy case loads*, as well as such *problems as the husband's difficulty in getting time off from work for tests and interviews appear to be the major source of delay*. Not all applicants are unlucky; sometimes the process goes smoothly. But long waits seem to have become the rule rather than the exception 6/.

A problem of major concern is that during the long wait between application for and granting of the license, the potential caregivers are enjoined from caring for children. This wait appears to be a real source of hardship for parents and caregivers alike. During the interim law abiding applicants often lose the children who were the reason for their applying. Others care for children illegally during the interim -- neither outcome seems desirable.

One of the most upsetting rules for caregivers is the one governing age and number of children. At one time there was no distinction between types of license; a day caregiver was a day caregiver, period. A change was then instituted, ostensibly for the purpose of upgrading infant care, whereby a caregiver was required to choose between two licenses 7/. The first, covering the 0 to 6 age range, limited care to a total of five children under six years of age (including the caregiver's own up to the age of 17). The second license, covering the ages 3 to 16 years, (later changed to 17) permitted care of a total of six children not less than three years old, including the caregiver's own. These arbitrary restrictions caused a great deal of negative response from caregivers in our sample concerning licensing regulations, because of the many problems posed for both parents and caregivers. In commenting on the difficulty of finding care for school age children, one consultant noted that taking a school age child for only a couple of hours a day means that the caregiver can't take another child and must therefore lose money. She said: *This is stupidity, to take a child away from a home because the license limits the number in care, and it's equally terrible to take that child from the place where he has been cared for for three, four, maybe five years just because he turns seven* 8/.

This particular regulation works to reduce the amount of care available to school age children. Many caregivers spoke of their desire to care for more school age children, especially furing the short hours of the school term. At present they can only do this by breaking the law.

Aside from complaints about the time and procedures required to obtain a license, and the unnecessary restrictiveness of certain regulations there is another facet to licensing which was both supported and criticized by licensees -- the authority role implicit in the procedure. Licensing definitely implies a policing function. Many women see licensing as a protection. It gives them the feeling that they have established their qualifications and have received official sanction. Others see the authority as arbitrary and demanding. They do not feel that a license is proof of quality in caregiving and they are resentful of its inability to place trust in personal qualities.

In many ways the Day Care Consultant* provided a bridge between the caregiver and the more formal legal procedure. However, as far as we could determine, there was little if any contact between licensing workers and consultants. In only one office that we visited were the two housed in the same facility. In general, communication seemed to be meagre if not non-existent. A consultant pointed out that licensing workers tend to be seen as policemen, as enforcers, while the consultants could and did take an educational as well as supportive role, that of counselor and friend. She noted:

> *Day care givers view the workers as authority figures, and punitive. I am not threatening or heavy-handed. For instance, if a complaint came in that a mother was caring for too many children, I would explain to her the reasons that one could not have that many children; I would let her know I understood the pressure on her to take more. I know them all well and they felt free to discuss things with me. Now (since the department director is curtailing the consultant's function) they are in limbo. Nobody is there to help them, to give them support, to ever say 'You're doing a good job . . ."*

In speaking further about the relationship between caregiver and worker, as opposed to that between caregiver and consultant, she said:

6/ In one case an applicant, after four attempts, and increasing nervousness with each, was unable to get clearance from Sacramento for her fingerprints; finally, the local police took care of the matter in a few minutes, shaking their heads over the unnecessary confusion. One woman was in tears because her licensing worker told her she must lose weight or be denied a license; another applicant's husband was allergic to the TB test.

7/ A third license allowing care up to ten children is restricted to caregivers who have a paid assistant.

8/ On the subject of age, she noted that neither should caregivers be denied a license on the basis of their own age: *Age alone has nothing to do with the ability to provide good care.*

* See page 29 for description of this now non-existent program.

> *It's a question of personality. The worker comes in in an authority role and some people are not used to using authority in a constructive way. The personal contact is very important; I go in the role of friend. Then too there is always the matter of rules and their application. Many of the licensing workers are new and don't know how to modify the rules (to facilitate good care). The relationship they have with the mothers depends on how they apply these rules; the workers often talk to them like criminals and many (of the mothers) get very upset about this. . .*

While the consultants were active they spent a good deal of time recruiting new caregivers, and making referrals to licensed caregivers who had vacancies. This service enhanced the value placed on a license by caregivers who received help in filling their vacancies. Consultants played an important role in regulating the logistics of supply and demand, often a sticky problem in family day care.

CHAPTER VII

THE LOGISTICS OF CARE: SUPPLY AND DEMAND

We asked a number of questions which we hoped would shed some light on issues of supply and demand, i.e., how do women get started as family day care givers? where do they get children? do they have vacancies? The answers to such questions should provide some information about the ways in which the supply and demand for caregiving works itself out.

We asked all of the women we interviewed about the reasons why they undertook family day care.

HOW DID YOU HAPPEN TO START CARING FOR CHILDREN?

	Mothers who had no children (N=64)	Mothers who have only preschool (N=110)	Mothers who have school age (N=73)
Met own needs			
Needed extra income	17%	20%	18%
Needed companions for own children	12	14	6
Needed company, was bored, lonely	9	9	7
	38%	43%	31%
Looked like a better job			
Wanted to stay home (with own children had worked, etc.)	16	24	16
Had taught in nursery school (pay too low, no longer rewarding)	9	3	6
Had done foster care (wanted less than 24 hour day job)	2	4	1
Friend, relative was FDCM, looked likeaa good idea	5	9	3
	32%	40%	26%
Responded to a request			
Friend, neighbor asked me to sit for them	17	14	37
Other	13	3	6
	100%	100%	100%

Clearly there are some predictors of the drawing power of family day care; namely, the opportunity to earn a supplementary income without taking employment outside of the home. If this desire exists, a suggestion or request by a friend or neighbor is an additional propelling factor. Conversely, family day care is not ordinarily an appropriate choice for someone who needs an income adequate enough for self-support or who has no desire to remain at home.

HAVE YOU ROOM FOR MORE SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN NOW?

Yes	41%
Conditional yes	22
No	37
	100%

WOULD YOU LIKE MORE?

Yes	39%
Conditional yes	19
No	41
No answer	1
	100%

WOULD YOU CARE FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS?

	Have you in the past?	Would you now?
Yes	40%	29%
Conditional yes	3	40
No	52	21
Didn't answer	5	10
	100%	100%

We also asked our sample of women who had only preschool children (N=110) about their interest in caring for school age children.

WOULD YOU TAKE SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN?

Yes	27%
No	57
Depends on age of own child	14
Other	2
	100%

HAVE YOU HAD SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN IN THE PAST?

Yes	60%
No	37
No answer	3
	100%

WOULD YOU LIKE SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN IF LICENSE WOULD PERMIT?

Yes	21%
No	24
Probably not, or could not say	45
Depends on age of own child	10
	100%

The answers to these questions indicate that many of the mothers we interviewed would like to have more school age children and would provide care for special needs children. However, some who would like more could take them legally only if licensing regulations were changed. Others simply had not made connections with families needing care.

We asked how caregivers get their children.

FROM WHOM DO YOU USUALLY GET REQUESTS FOR CARE OF SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN?

Family of children (parents, grandparents)	49%
Department Public Social Services	18
Friends, neighbors	12
References from former parents	10
School	8
Other	3

HOW DO PEOPLE FIND OUT ABOUT YOU?

	Mothers who had no children (N=64)	Mothers who have only preschool (N=110)	Mothers who have school age (N=73)
Department Public Social Services, Welfare Department, (Licensing)	39%	48%	41%
Personal referrals, friends, church, neighbors, etc.	39	32	45
Advertise in newspaper, super-market, laundromat	16	18	6
School	2	1	7
Other and had no comment	4	1	1
	100%	100%	100%

More than one-third of the women reported that they obtained most of their children through a network of personal contacts with friends, neighbors, church members. A larger number obtained their children from non-personal sources, the most common being the licensing department (DPSS) or direct advertising.

One of the problems of family day care is that until one is very well established with many fairly predictable sources of locating children, the vacancy factor may be discouragingly high. One advantage of licensing is that it makes your name available to the public. Unfortunately, the fact that the community referral system is handled by the Welfare Department seems to have an adverse effect on its usefulness. People are reluctant to call "welfare" for a referral and the department does not give this peripheral service much attention, so that calling for names of caregivers can be a frustrating experience for parents trying to locate care.

A look at the women who no longer had children in their care proved instructive. Clearly, it is common to go for some time without children. (N=64).

HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE YOU HAVE HAD CHILDREN IN YOUR CARE?

Three months or less	27%
Four to six months	27
Seven to nine months	19
Ten to twelve months	15
Over one year	8
Answer unclear	4
	100%

HOW DOES IT HAPPEN THAT YOU ARE NOT CARING FOR CHILDREN NOW?

Does not want to care for children now	69%
Children in care no longer need it	5
Want children, not getting calls	14
Other and no answer	12
	100%

An important aspect of family day care as a community service is the opportunity for a caregiver and a care-seeker to locate each other. Licensing can facilitate this match by requiring the caregiver to make herself visible. However, getting one's name placed on a list of licensed caregivers is not an adequate way of serving the community need for information about supply and demand. A major responsibility of the consultants was to handle the referrals of parents wanting care and to keep track of vacancies in homes of licensed caregivers.

The consultants appeared to provide the glue that held the program of recruiting, supporting, upgrading and expanding day care services together.

The consensus among consultants and caregivers alike seemed to be that it was a sad day for family day care when the role of consultant was phased out, first by reducing the duties to office work only, doing referral and vacancy control by telephone, then by eliminating the position entirely except for a centralized, skeleton staff. The shift in departmental priorities to concern almost exclusively with welfare recipients (consultants were directed to follow-up on referrals of welfare clients only) effectively curtailed the day care recruitment and referral program for the general community. Along with this shift the emphasis on developing quality changed markedly. The consultants were dismayed and caregivers puzzled by the change in policy. The latter, uninformed about the abolition of the consultant role, knew only that the people they had come to depend on for help were no longer in evidence.

Undoubtedly, newly licensed caregivers who were just beginning to learn the ropes were the ones who felt the greatest loss. The old timers who had developed their own network for getting children and for providing their own support system saw the demise of the consultants as another example of lack of real community recognition for the importance of family day care.

A Transitional Comment

We were suprised to discover that 18% of the women on the licensing list could not be located and that only 14% (9) out of 64 in our group of women who did not have children in care were actively interested in getting children. We had not expected that such a large group of licensed caregivers would turn out to be unavailable for caregiving. Conversely we were equally surprised that 81% of our sample of active caregivers had been licensed for at least three years. Apparently many women drop by the wayside during their beginning years of caregiving, but others find a role which is rewarding enough to keep going.

Throughout this study much of our data seemed messy and recalcitrant as we tried to group and organize it. Much of this messiness was due to the exploratory nature of the study and our insistence on leaving answers open-ended. Some was the result of ineptitude. But much of the problem lay in the diversity of the population sampled. Caregivers did not group themselves into tidy categories. By the end of the study we had some feel for role choices which appear to give some organizing characteristics to the diversity we found. Because case histories seemed to organize certain aspects of the data much better than tables reporting percentages, the next section is devoted to case histories of women who seemed to be good examples of certain types of caregiving.

PART II

INTRODUCTION

Being -- and becoming -- a family day care mother seems to be the result of a series of situational circumstances. Sometimes family day care mothers deliberately choose the role; sometimes it is really foisted upon them by an insistent neighbor or a grandchild in need of care. Some fall into it almost inadvertently. Those who stay with it seem to be women who can shape it into a meaningful role which gives them personal satisfaction and a sense of social fulfillment.

How child care works often seems to depend on the role in which the caregiver has been cast, consciously or otherwise. A number of factors can be instrumental in determining role choice. The life style of the caregiver, the point she has reached in the developmental cycle of caregiving, and the physical setting which she has available all appear to influence the type of care which is provided. There is probably a closer relationship between type of care and role choice in family day care than in center care, because the role of family caregiver is less well defined than the role of teacher. The teacher's role tends to be a separate and more distinct entity in the individual's experience -- more visible, more specifically prescribed, more dependent on organizational policies and often more consciously chosen.

Our experience indicates that there are, perhaps, two or three basic types of role definitions which can be used to categorize family day care givers. These basic groupings have been helpful to us in sorting out the answers to such questions as: Why does this person do family day care, how long is she likely to do it and for whom, what kind of child care does she provide, and where does she find the supports she needs to do it? What are her rewards; are they financial or do they fulfill expressive needs? By looking at some of these role types we hope to be able to shed some light on questions which have to do with how both parents and communities go about finding good child care and holding on to it.

CHAPTER VIII

"I'M NOT JUST A SITTER"-- THE PROFESSIONAL ROLE

Because this study focuses on school age care, we have chosen to begin by looking at the life and child care styles of those family day care mothers who seem tp provide the richest environment. Many actually state a preference for children beyond preschool or, at least, indicate age makes no difference. Some are partly motivated to do family day care by the desire to provide companionship for their own school age children, and to add to the complexity of the home environment and their role in it.

In age, these mothers are most frequently in their 30's or early 40's. They are acutely aware of the needs of older children and have developed skills in managing their own. Because their children are no longer infants or preschoolers, they tend to be women who have themselves moved past the early confining stages of motherhood and have begun to develop their own interests and extended network in the community. Often this development occurs as a result of meeting family needs, in city-sponsored parent education classes or the Parent-Teacher Association, for example. Many have developed special interests which they share with the children in their care, such as hobbies and crafts, often involving expeditions into the surrounding community.

Another reason they like school age care is that it gives them time to develop these and other special interests and become self-fulfilled individuals, no longer bound by the I-am-just-a-mother role. Furthermore, many feel that children are the most important asset our society has, and it is critical that resources -- time and money and effort and not the least of all love -- be devoted to providing the best child care possible. As a group they tend to be most vocal about the need for people and programs which will support and upgrade family day care.

A number of these family day care mothers speak of eventually entering the teaching profession. Some have worked before their children were born and may return to the outside work force. In terms of clear educational guidelines and standards for working with parents and the development of informal networks of resources in the community, they appear to be closest to performing a professional role. Many have marketable skills, but feel for the present that home is the place where they need and want to be.

The physical setting in these homes tends to be the best in our sample for school age care, although there are always -- and this is typical of Family Day Care and its highly situational nature -- exceptions. Socio-economic status can be a strong factor in the size and adequacy of house and play areas. But, generally speaking, homes in this group are better adapted to school age care because school age children still live there. There are apt to be more toys and games and athletic equipment for large muscle development. There is apt to be more freedom of movement because school children require it, along with some explicit although less arbitrary restrictions about what behavior goes and what doesn't (i.e., the garage with Mr. Bond's motorcycle in it is strictly off limits when he is not present, or, you may go to the supervised playground only with Mrs. Bond's permission and an agreement on when to be back). Limit-setting tends to be more functional in terms of what school age children require both for their own development and the general needs of the group.

Most caregivers of this type are advocates of the "I'm-not-just-a-baby-sitter" ethos 1/ as opposed to the stuck-at-home feeling. Good child care seems to go hand-in-hand with this approach.

Tapping One's Resources

The Bond's pleasant but unostentatious two-story home houses a family of four -- Mr. and Mrs. Bond and their two active young sons, 8 and 5½ years. Its location is a suburban low-density, middle-income residential area in the foothills of the mountains which ring the Los Angeles basin. The setting is ideal in the sense that the attractive, nicely furnished house is large and the yard spacious, with grass and many trees (one of which supports a tree house built by the children) as well as plenty of dirt to dig in. Within a mile are a fire station, the library, a large shopping area and the school which the Bond children attend.

1/ See June Sale with Yolanda Torres, I'm Not Just a Babysitter (1972). This vivid pictorial account of family day care is a graphic description of why the term baby-sitting, often misused by the public and frequently protested by family day care mothers, is not applicable to what good family day care mothers do. For good school age care it is particularly a misnomer.

The quiet neighborhood does not lend itself well to neighborhood play because the houses are set back from a street with no sidewalks, and there are few families with young children. To make up for this deficiency Mrs. Bond draws upon a commanding array of community resources as well as her own interests and abilities, and the group at her house. This group, which includes four family day care children ranging in age from seven to ten years plus her own two school age children, makes a small community in itself 2/. Day care for school age children seems to function particularly well at Mrs. Bond's because of two critical factors in the physical setting: 1) the space is sufficient in size to support a variety of activities, including physical activities, and 2) the group is sufficient in size to provide lots of practice in social skills and make accomplishing things, such as constructing the tree house, gardening, building a train set, possible.

What really makes it all work is Mrs. Bond herself. In her early 30's, she is attractive, articulate, with a sense of humor finely honed over the seven years she has done licensed day care: *We (the children and I) giggle over things together a lot.* She began doing family day care by accident in 1967 when a neighbor asked her to take care of her child on a temporary basis. Significantly, she includes her husband and children when commenting on why she continued: *We liked it so well we decided to take other children.* She impressed us by the clarity of her perception of children's developmental needs and the high state of the art she had achieved in going about meeting them. The interviewer had arrived a few minutes early and gotten her out of the shower, hair dripping; she dismissed the apology with a casual *No problem,* she just had to make time count while the children were in school. She and her husband were attending the Music Center that evening, a luxury they could not afford were it not for the little extra money family day care brings in. We made a mental note of two similarities with other family day care mothers with whome we talked: 1) They must be extraordinarily well organized to perform their role, and 2) the income from caregiving, while a desirable and sometimes important benefit, provides for extras and is not a basic source of family income.

Transportation to and from school is a special service offered by Mrs. Bond, the only family day care mother in the area who provides it. The family day care children attend schools too far to walk to. Each day of the regular school year she drives the children to school and picks them up, making daily rounds to three different schools, once in the morning and three different times in the afternoon. Her day starts with the arrival of the first child at 7:30 a.m. At 8:30 she begins her morning transportation run. Home by 9:30, she devotes the remaining morning hours to housework and fulfilling her own needs as a person; taking art classes is one means to this end. When she began family day care seven years ago she took younger children. Now she prefers school age, not because her own two boys, now need companionship but, as she puts it: *At this point, I like older children -- they are easier for me now. I've gotten tired of having little ones all day and I want my mornings free. I'd like to express myself, develop my own identity. It makes me feel better about me.*

At 1:45 p.m. she begins her own private bus service again, making 2:30, 3:15 and 3:30 pick ups at the three schools. In the afternoon she devotes herself entirely to the children *(The work is very concentrated)* until the last one leaves around 6:00 p.m. For five hours of care plus transportation to and from school, plus a substantial snack -- more a mini-meal, consisting of such foods as puddings, milk, fruit juices, pizzas, cheese, fruit, peanut butter -- Mrs. Bond charges $3.00 a day during the school year, $4.00 when the children are there all day in the summer 3/.

Beyond these visible services are a number of others, highly beneficial to parents and children but often unrecognized and unappreciated, due in part to their lack of visibility. These added services represent hidden costs to the family day care mother in terms of time, effort and money, but most family day care mothers like Mrs. Bond would rather stop caring for children

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2/ Licensing regulations limit a family day care mother to no more than six children, ages 3 to 17, including her own. We found that the most knowledgeable consultants, aware of the great need for care and scarcity of good homes, were frequently willing to bend the rules in the case of competent caregivers such as Mrs. Bond. Family day care mothers point out that older children often benefit more from larger groups than young children; many games and socially-oriented activities require a minimum of four to six participants. Counting older children, often teen-agers who are not around, of the family day care mother appears to be unrealistic. When these older children are home, they frequently are a help rather than a hindrance.

3/ When Mrs. Bond has younger children who require all day care, she charges the same fee: *This type of work is different but it requires the same investment of my energy.*

than cut them out and compromise on quality. If the children are ill they can stay home from school; there is an upstairs bedroom which can be used for isolation in addition to the playroom. Mrs. Bond gives medication, keeping careful track of the dosage as well as exactly how long the child has slept and other pertinent details which she reports to the parent of the ill child. She takes children to the eye doctor, the dentist, the regular doctor whenever necessary:

> *I take all the children along with me; they take their homework. I get some very funny looks in the doctor's office from people when they see me with six children. One time a woman said: 'They can't all be yours!' I said "yup, they're all mine!' I didn't like her attitude.*

However, the things Mrs. Bond most prides herself on giving children are the intangibles -- those supports that give a child the feeling of stability, particularly when the mother cannot provide it. She not only sees herself as a surrogate mother [4], something much more than a baby sitter, but she involves herself totally with the children while they are in her home, teaching them how to share, how to give respect to one another: *I like the mother to understand I am a stand-in for her in all types of abstract learning experience.* Mrs. Bond has established the reputation of being a skilled tutor. Among the special services she offers is helping children with their studies; doing homework is one of the major activities during the school year. The mothers ask that she work closely with the children to help them understand their school work. The four second and third graders she now cares for -- two sets of siblings from two different families, one one-parent and one two -- are all in special classes at school and have a number of learning problems [5].

Because her involvement with individual children is so total, she would not want to take any more children:

> *Part of the job of being a family day care mother is being mature enough to handle (such decisions). Knowing your limit is one. For example, yesterday was report card day and one little girl started to cry. I knew she needed special attention -- she is in special needs classes. I tried to find a quiet corner to comfort her, and I explained why she had a different report than the others. She needed my individual attention and support; I couldn't give her this if I had too many children.*

Nevertheless, Mrs. Bond feels licensing restrictions on the numbers of children a family day care mother can take are too limiting. Her point -- and that of many other competent family day care mothers -- is that the caregiver should be given more discretion in who should be cared for. As an example, she cited the case of one little boy whose mother had to go to work and had no other place to put him: *She would have had to leave him with an unlicensed person; I felt he needed a good home. He's been here for two years now.* When she first got her license she was forced by the licensing worker to give up a child who had been there for three weeks:

> *The child desperately needed good care. He wouldn't talk; the mother said he had been tossed around from pillar to post. The worker told me I couldn't have more than one child under two along with my own and I would have to give him up that very day. I was furious!*

The number of children Mrs. Bond has at the moment makes a good size group for doing things together. There is thus little need for outside activities such as school recreation programs (although the oldest, a fourth grader, does participate in sports at the Y, including basketball, football and swimming) or neighborhood play. Because they are all school age the children have great fun together, when they are not doing home work, working on group projects -- setting up their trains in the house or playing outdoors in the tree house or digging in the dirt. When we were there the current activity was the digging of what appeared to be a Heffalump trap, straight out of Winnie The Pooh. Indoors the children have free run of the house. Dramatic play with dress-up clothes in the attic is frequently engaged in, especially by the girls. The park is a much-used place for special activities requiring a little more room, equipment and change of scenery; there are several parks in the vicinity accessible by bicycle or a short automobile trip.

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[4] Family day care mothers frequently make it very clear that they do not attempt to *take the place* of the natural mothers, particularly with respect to superseding her in the child's affection.

[5] Mrs. Bond was once asked to take a physically handicapped child but felt that she couldn't since he needed a great deal of physical care, so she found someone else for him: *This is a question you must ask yourself. Would taking a child like this take too much time away from the other children?*

Mrs. Bond notes that there are some really good resources in this area but echos a concern typical of other family day care mothers about public parks: *. . . one park we don't go to. It has a rowdy bunch of teen-agers and isn't safe. They do mean and ugly things and I wouldn't want to take younger children there.* Besides the park there are a number of places to which Mrs. Bond takes the children on field trips. The group is highly mobile, particularly during the summer, and frequently goes hiking in the mountains close at hand or horseback riding at nearby stables, which have 750 acres available for trails. They often go to play on the cars of a full-scale train at a park nearby, visit the zoo, or visit botanical gardens and museums in the area. Swimming in the neighborhood pool is one of the joys of summer. On one typical day during the summer vacation they all went off to a public recreation spot in the mountains for a morning of picnicking, swimming, hiking, sailing boats, looking for frogs and jumping in the mini-waterfalls. When there is a fee for the recreation places they visit, the parents pay; *If it's small*, notes Mrs. Bond, *I treat.*

The Bond's private automobile insurance covers the children while they are in the car; day care insurance available at special reduced rates to licensed family day care mothers which Mrs. Bond got "years ago" protects her when the children are in her home. Fortunately, she has never yet needed to use it. She seems acutely aware, as were all the family day care mothers with whom we talked, of the dangers and responsibilities of being a family day care mother. When the children are away from the house she always goes with them: *When I take them to the park, I sit there away from them so they get a feeling that they are on their own, but I want to be there to supervise. There has been trouble in the parks lately.* Less freedom of movement for the children for more peace of mind for her is a trade-off made of necessity.

Summer, with school out, means even more responsibility supervising children. All of the children attended summer school from 8:00 a.m. to 11:15 or 12:15 (depending on grade level) and walked to Mrs. Bond's, remaining until 6:30 or 7:00 p.m. Mrs. Bond was relieved of her school deliveries and pick ups since the children can all attend school within walking distance. When the summer school session was over, some went on vacation with parents, others came full time. They embarked regularly on a series of expeditions to a dozen or more favorite recreation spots in the Los Angeles area, most of them involving direct nature experiences. Several of the children took swimming lessons, and all of them have use of a pool belonging to one of the children's parents, under Mrs. Bond's supervision.

While schedules are less pressing and times are more relaxed, summer means less freedom for Mrs.Bond. Although the children go to summer school her afternoon begins at 12:20 p.m. instead of 1:45 p.m. Summer also means more work fixing lunches and more cost for food, car expenses and play equipment. Last summer Mrs. Bond spent $50.00 for toys, including sturdy Tonka trucks, and for materials for building a crawl-through tunnel in the back yard. For all the added expense she charges only $1.00 more per day. When we asked if there was anything more difficult about summer care than winter she seemed surprised, perhaps even slightly offended: *Nothing is difficult! This is my job and I love it!*

Mrs. Bond takes on a number of roles in her performance as family day care mother and obviously sees herself as professionally competent in each one of them, as indeed she appears to be. For some of the services she provides, such as tutoring, parents purposely seek her out; others are provided in the line of duty, often without recognition. She works closely with the children's teachers in the elementary school, having conferences with them as stand-in for the parents every two weeks since four of the children have learning disabilities. She takes pride in her accomplishments and theirs: *I really have seen the children improve over the year.* She counsels the parents not only about problems with school but the children's behavior in general. Her relationship with parents is very close; they talk frequently about the children and she periodically writes one page describing a typical day in their daughter's or son's life: *This gives the parent an idea of what the child is doing in my home and the progress he or she is making.* She is a fervent believer in family day care: *Many children, particularly children with only one parent, experience a lot of trauma in their own families. If they see others they can cope with their own better.* She feels that anger, the showing of emotion, is not bad: *I'm in favor of boys being able to cry.* And boys playing house is good: *They are role playing -- it gets rid of some of our social stereotypes.*

Mrs. Bond clearly sees herself as combining the functions of a good mother and teacher in a non-institutional context. Speaking of centers and the importance of alternative child care settings, she noted that some children really needed the warmth and support of a small home-like environment before they go into a larger group center -- an attitude voiced by many of the family day care mothers we interviewed. She spoke of one child she cared for whose family situation was difficult: *That child desperately needed a home environment at least in the beginning. He needed his own 'comfort post'. He couldn't have made it in a center, at least to start with. Big centers are too structured -- he needed more flexibility -- a comforting, supportive situation. Maybe later he would be ready to join a big group.*

Very much against the institutionalization of child care, Mrs. Bond thus sees family day care as the best kind of care, a learning experience in which children often deprived of their own intact home life can get a better understanding of how families work: *Learning through doing in the home is best.* She decries all the horror stories about family day care, of children tied to bedposts: *I'm tired of it -- we need some positive emphasis and some education of the public, especially parents, about what we do.* She resents the feeling some parents seem to have that she is "stealing" their money. Aware that she does "an awful lot" and that the services she provides children and parents are important, she realizes too that often because of their invisibility parents do not appreciate them. She was glad to see our study being conducted, hoping that it would bring before the public eye the services family day care mothers often provide: *It takes a special kind of person to work with some one else's children all day long. . . Although employers are not supposed to ask about child care arrangements they do. One of my mothers told hers: 'I have a sitter who can field any problem'. I felt good about that . . .*

For a caregiver like Mrs. Bond who has been able to define needs clearly and develop unusually strong competencies, licensing appears to have no practical functions, and in effect can be a hindrance to providing good service. She resents restrictions in the number of children she takes as an insult to her intelligence as well as a denial of care to mothers and children desperately needing it: *I realize there are some family day care mothers who would take more children than they are capable of because of the money, and parents have a right to expect that the places and people who they are going to leave their children with have been properly checked out. But if you're competent, let that be recognized. For me, licensing is just a hassle.*

Mrs. Bond, like a number of other experienced family day care mothers, feels strongly that competence and initiative could and should be taken into account. She feels this could be done in a number of ways. For example, references from satisfied natural mothers verifying the competence of a family day care mother could be provided, or the licensing agency could pose a set of hypothetical circumstances suggested by family day care mothers themselves to test the "common-sense" of caregivers. She herself is long past the point where she needs advice from a consultant; in fact she performs this role informally in talking with new family day care mothers when they call her on the phone. Her community-wide reputation for excellence means that she no longer needs to rely on advertising for children: *I haven't had to do that in four years.* She frequently gets calls from the Department of Social Service Services, but is always full 6/.

Mrs. Bond regularly provides a comprehensive set of social and intellectual services. She is continually seeking ways to open up her own life to that of the children she cares for; she adds variety and choice constantly, with new ideas, new equipment, new places to go to and new things to do. She provides tutoring, counseling (to other family day care mothers as well as parents), health care, developmental progress reports, transportation, field trips, nutrition. She is a one woman community service agency -- and yet parents still sometimes begrudge the $15.00 a week.

In spite of the drawbacks, however, Mrs. Bond finds many satisfactions; not the least is the excitement of being with the children, watching them grow and develop: *They are really infectious. We often giggle and skip along the street together* 7/. There are other rewards too. She has a job in which she sees herself as a skilled provider of vital services; what she does is important and she knows it. Further dividends are the companionship family day care provides for her own children and the pocket money it contributes, the least emphasized of the pleasures but still satisfying 8/.

Mrs. Bond will probably continue to do family day care as long as the demand exists and her children need her, as well as companions, at home. Eventually she may move on to a full-time out-

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6/ There is some turnover, particularly at the beginning or end of the school year, but the regulars nearly always come back.

7/ Typical of this group of family day care mothers, Mrs. Bond sees herself -- in spite of her self-appointed role as teacher -- as one of the group. Clear in her expectations and firm in the limits she sets, she neverthless avoids authoritarian decision-making for the children. Her style is more nearly like that of facilitator, in considering teacher role-models.

8/ The pocket must be small indeed. Considering the fact that she devotes a minimum of six hours a day including transporting time to child care, Mrs. Bond's gross income is $ .50 per child per hour. From this must be deducted food, gas, equipment and maintenance costs. School age children are particularly hard, it appears, on the day care family's possessions: *The car is the biggest expense; school age boys can cause a lot of wear and tear on the upholstery. There's extra upkeep for the house, too, from things like bouncing on the furniture!*

side job; for the present she finds this arrangement meets her needs effectively. She likes having school age children because she has time to develop her own interests, but points out that the situation may change next year; if a child requires full time care she may do it. It is also possible that when her children are grown that she may purposely return to care of preschool children, to meet her own expressive needs.

Mrs. Glen . . . *Convenient Location, Prefer School Age . . .*

Another caregiver of the "I'm not just a sitter" type, Mrs. Glen lives in a neighboring predominantly white-collar community 9/ with her husband and three children, two teen-agers, 18 and 15, and a seven-year-old. She, too, has developed a unique service due to an accident of geography -- the Glens live almost directly across the street from the school which her own children attend. Active in school affairs because of them, she developed contacts which resulted in a family day care clientele composed primarily of teachers' children. Because the children are home with their mothers during the summer, she suspends her family day care activities between June and September. This arrangement is highly satisfactory to Mrs. Glen who likes to have summers free for family activities and for "doing her own thing". Over the years Mrs. Glen, like Mrs. Bond, has developed a rich repertoire of roles from which to choose. Besides the many years she has been involved in PTA and other school-oriented affairs, she also spent eight years attending parent education classes with her own preschoolers (an excellent training ground for family day care mothers, it appears), psychology and sociology courses in junior college (*actually they've been no real help in doing child care. I took them because I always wanted to be a social worker)*, lots of 'baby-sitting' and lots of child care, but most importantly, she notes, *I've raised two teen-agers.*

In her late 30's, attractive and informally dressed in tank-top, pants, and thong sandals, Mrs. Glen curled up in a living room chair to explain how she began doing family day care: *A friend asked me to take care of her child and I realized that it would be a good way to help pay the children's medical bills, like orthodontia, and still stay home with my children.* She feels the same sense of importance that Mrs. Bond and others like her do for their work:

> *This is a great job for women who want to be at home. I really feel it is an important thing -- these children are our future citizens and they should not be left at home alone. If we don't take care of kids now, we will have to take care of them later in institutions. I feel very responsible -- this is the most important job I know of, bar none!*

Particularly concerned about the attempt by cities to push family day care out of residential and into commercial areas by zoning restrictions, she commented:

> *They're so short sighted. They will pay in the future for not attending to children's needs now. Young children need a good foundation; these are their formative years. The city makes it too tough for family day care mothers. You must not put children next to beer joints. . . they need to be in homes, in residential sections . . .*

She points out another fact -- family day care mothers like herself are in an ideal position to be neighborhood 'watchdogs' since they are home every day and can see everything that happens up and down the street. We were struck by the constant, almost minute-by-minute monitoring of daily street and neighborhood activities which family day care mothers typically do 10/.

Mrs. Glen talked about her particular situation and demand for care in general:

> *I started with teachers' children so I had no kids during vacations -- it's still that way and it works out beautifully. Because we live across the street from the school I get lots of calls, more and more lately -- I have to refer them to friends because I'm nearly always full.*
>
> *Many parents are leaving children alone partly because there is no place for them and partly because they don't want to pay for good care. About the only question they ask*

9/ It is probably no coincidence that the area in which these two family day care mothers are located, which seemed to yield the largest percentage of good family day care homes for school age children, also had two of the most competent licensing consultants, fiercely dedicated to the development of excellence in family day care.

10/ Mrs. Glen does, however, go out into the community, sometimes in the mid-day between 10:00 and 2:00 when the children are in school, frequently in the evenings to classes and in the summer which she has no day care children.

> *me is 'what will it cost?' The Children's Center at the school has a bad program -- I'd never leave my children there. We need parent education. I always suggest parents interview someone besides myself so they can see for themselves* 11/ . . .

She has been doing family day care for four years in a house she considers ideal for it. Not as large as the Bond's, it nevertheless lends itself well to children's activities. There is direct access to a fenced back yard through the kitchen and a laundry room. The Glens have given the dining room over entirely to the children, of whom there are five -- including part-timers -- ranging in age from seven to ten years. The chandelier has suffered repeated traumas inflicted accidentally by rough-housing school-agers, but Mrs. Glen is philosophical. The interviewer notes:

> *Her style as a family day care mother seems very child-oriented, let-them-do-their-own-thing, but she is very careful to keep track of them and is obviously very effective with clear limit-setting. She has set up the environment so there is a minimum of verbal restrictions; the children just all know exactly what they can and cannot do. They can play in the outdoor yard, a big and deep (169 foot) L-shaped area with a play house, big swing set and cement wheel toy area, or the playroom which is all theirs and is stacked with boxes full of toys, but not the garage ('Too dangerous with Mr. Glen's motorcycle in it!') or the living room ('I made it off-limits when I had to replace the couch last year'). 'I don't restrict. They can play in the dirt -- it's good for them,' Mrs. Glen told me. 'Lots of family day care mothers don't want older kids because they can't handle them. You can't give them too many 'no's' but you must have rules. I like school age because it gives my own son companionship and me free time, but you must be firm. We're not allowed (by licensing) to spank; sometimes this causes problems for the family day care mothers because sometimes parents want it'.*

Mrs. Glen has one more child than the licensing regulations technically allow. (Her children ages 15 and 7 years old are counted in the quota of six she may care for). But she points out the unrealistic aspects of the rules. *First of all the children are never here all at one time. Secondly, my teen-age daughter is usually away at school and when she is here she is a great help with the children.* Fortunately for Mrs. Glen, her consultant was understanding as well as knowledgeable; those who are often wink at the rules they feel mitigate against providing good care and services. The physical setting and Mrs. Glen's competence clearly support the size group she presently has.

Her feelings about most of the other licensing regulations and procedures are equally negative:

> *The workers are intrusive and the rules ridiculous. My licensing worker told me you can't be licensed with a two-story home* 12/. *She measured the windows and paced off the rooms -- it was kind of silly. The licensing process was a long hassle that took eight months; finger-printing cost $10.00 and took forever. They don't ever look at the family day care mother. They are thinking of the physical safety of the child, which is as it should be, but a lot of family day care mothers are being discouraged by the silly regulations!* 13/.

Although the house itself is small, the setting is conducive to good school age care because of the large yard and the extended environment which the school yard directly across the street provides. The children (the first comes at 7:30 a.m. and the last leaves for school at 10:00 a.m.) cross the street in the morning under the watchful eye of Mrs. Glen. She shares the typical family day care mother's feeling of responsibility, heightened in the case of school-agers who are more mobile, independent, pressing for freedom: *I know I'm overprotective of my own kids, but for the family day care children it is more important. We had a man showing himself not long ago - it's a natural place right near the school yard.* In the afternoon they cross at the corner with the crossing guard and walk one-half block down the street to Mrs. Glen's house. They use the school yard a great deal for games, playing ball, skating, jumping rope; Mrs. Glen goes with them and joins in the activities, -- *but I usually turn the rope. I'm not too good at jumping any more!* They use other community resources frequently -- the zoo, a city park eight or nine blocks away,

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11/ Mrs. Glen's neighborhood and community contacts give her access to many other family day care settings; she both gives and receives referrals constantly.

12/ Fortunately for Mrs. Bond, she apparently did not have the same worker. There appears to be considerable latitude in interpretation of licensing regulations by individual workers.

13/ Mrs. Glen did have great praise for her consultant: *She's a really caring person -- we desperately need more like her.* She was depressed to hear that the consultants had been relieved of their jobs with the latest departmental shake-up. This move was the result of a number of state and local decisions which many observers, perceiving them as political, privately decry as being a major set-back to supporting and upgrading family day care other recreational areas in the nearby Los Angeles area: *I've been thinking about taking them hiking in the foothills, but I have a couple of wild ones, boys who might run off and there I'd be. . .* Mrs. Glen shares Mrs. Bond's feeling that although the older ones love having babies and younger ones around, it is easier to have school age alone. She thinks that a mixed age group lends itself to teasing, bullying, competition for the family day care mother's time, and makes it harder to do things away from home 14/. For her, she feels, a group of about nine school age children would be just about right.

Relationships with parents are close. Many are friends or referred by friends or school personnel whom she knows well. Sometimes it is too close: *That may not be good, if it's not treated as a business arrangement. I have a funny feeling about collecting money for taking care of children. So often the pay gets a week late -- then two weeks -- then three!* 15/. But she also feels that it is good to know parents, that family day care mothers can work with them better that way 16/. Because contact is primarily by word of mouth through friends, parents seem to feel secure and seldom ask questions except about discipline (*They say 'you have my OK to spank'. I punish but I don't spank. We're not allowed to -- but I wouldn't anyway*) and fees (*I have mostly school teachers' and engineers' children -- this is a better area so they don't complain about the fee*). She charges by the hour -- $1.00 -- since most of the children are part-timers; if she tells the parent of a regular child she will charge $15.00 a week and he is there 20 hours she doesn't ask for extra money. She makes it clear to the parents that out of that fee come costs for food, insurance, transportation and equipment -- the required fire extinguisher, for example. When we spoke with her, she had just bought a new basketball, kickball and three new swing seats: *That will last a couple of seasons. I have $200 to $300 worth of Barbie doll equipment that belongs to my daughter. She sold it to me for $10.00!* 17/.

Like the majority of the family day care mothers in our sample she will keep children who are ill (she is proud of the fact that none of the mothers has had to lose time because her child was sick) and points out that she never charges more than $7.00 a day even though the children are often there ten hours. Mrs. Glen herself is, like many of the family day care mothers - apparently an extraordinarily hardy breed -never sick; if she needs help her mother comes over: *She is frequently here and the children know her.*

Eventually Mrs. Glen would like to become a preschool teacher. For now, one of the biggest rewards for doing family day care is being able to be home with her own children: *It's a selfish thing really.* The feeling it gives her as a competent, caring person is a factor too:

> *My consultant asked me: 'How do you feel right now?' I said, 'I feel important.' Day care gives me a good self concept. I have a part in molding children's lives. I want to let them know at least one person in the world outside of their own family cares about them. It makes me feel good.*
>
> *The wear and tear on things is hard and sometimes my teen-agers complain about the noise in the morning but I tell them, those are happy sounds, of children playing and having fun ... that's good. . .*

Like the Bonds, the entire Glen household functions as an extended family for the family day care children. Mr. Glen, who comes home for lunch, and all the Glen children including their teenage son, whom the children frequently go to watch playing water polo at the high school, are very

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14/ Not all family day care mothers would agree, particularly those who have no older children of their own. Many comment on the number of good things the younger learn from the older -- both cognitive and social skills -- and the patience and understanding the school-agers develop. Often the older children are a great help to mothers with young family day care children.

15/ This appears to be a typical reaction. Most family day care mothers see themselves not as entrepreneurs but as people who derive their satisfaction primarily from providing the services a friendly neighbor might, and are uncomfortable about charging for them.

16/ Without good communication and reasonable meeting of minds on values between the family day care mother and parent, most family day care mothers feel the welfare of the child suffers. This frequently causes role strain and drain for the family day care mother. Emlen (1971b) refers to the latter problem and its correlations with the nature of the FDCM/parent relationship.

17/ A day care family's children are probably the greatest single source of toys. This is a potential source of strain, if children resent having to share. Additional equipment, sometimes fairly well battered, is inherited from well-meaning friends and parents.

much part of the group. One of Mrs. Glen's comments about licensing illustrates the failure to respect the needs of the family day care families and husbands, most of whom clearly play an important role in the whole family day care picture: *The Department of Public Social Services wouldn't interview my husband in his office -- he had to be sitting right here even though they had seen our home. This meant time off from work -- for some it could be a real hardship.* When she is home from school Mrs. Glen's daughter helps out with the children. The fact that Mrs. Glen has two sons, she feels, is a definite asset: *Dealing with school age kids, especially ten year old boys, is easier for me because I've had boys myself -- I used to love girls; most women can relate better to girls. You need that experience with boys; you understand they really need that dirt pile. . .*

Speculation on the fact that both these homes are located in middle-class suburbs might lead to the conclusion that they are atypical and the kind of care they offer is limited to upper socioeconomic areas. The third home was located in a working class, ethnically-mixed section near industry and commercial establishments, where the general level of education, occupation and income are considerably lower than in the Bond and Glen communities.

Mrs. Torres -- Achieving the Best of Both Worlds

In Mrs. Torres, a Mexican-American woman who moves with ease in either culture, we found the same traits we had found in the other two family day care mothers. She had a flexibility of life style which allowed her to move out of the traditional role of homebound wife and mother to go out into the community and engage in her own interests. In the process she exposed the day care children to a wide variety of activities and settings which in turn expanded their horizons.

Luckier than many residents of the area who must live in barren stucco multiple dwellings, the Torres' live in their own tiny, tidy home. Except for its neatness, it is indistinguishable from the other small houses which line the street in this predominatly blue-collar Mexican-American neighborhood. Inside, it is more reminiscent, on a very modest scale, of Better Homes and Gardens than Olvera St., with its shag rug and walnut-paneled living room. Just beyond, one can see the tiny bedroom which the Torres' three little girls share with a proliferation of toys and a set of The World Book Encyclopedia. We met Mrs. Torres, a friendly, energetic lady of perhaps 30 with glasses and short dark hair, as she struggled out of her car juggling her eleven month old and a pile of construction paper, her seven-and-a-half year old in tow. She had just returned from the ECE (Early Childhood Education) class at school where she was helping to set up the program. Her rejoinder to our *You're right on time* was a breathless *Actually, I'm late! I stopped to pick up some craft materials for the children from one of the teachers -- I get all kinds of stuff that way!* When we first talked to her she had no family day care children; she had had major surgery in November and had had no calls during the first few months of the year. We asked if she got many calls for school age children: *No, because of my license (0 to 6 years). I'm going to change it because I would like older children now. I used to prefer babies but now I want school age children for companionship for my own girls. Licensing is too restrictive on ages -- it's not realistic.* (*Where had we heard that before?* We thought to ourselves.) When we called back in the summer, she told us she was caring for a nine year old boy, commenting that she had not received many calls, possibly because of the employment situation.

Mrs. Torres had no trouble getting her license three years ago, she thought, because she and her husband have always been involved with children in scouting and various other youth groups. Even so, the process took a year. Because she relies on the Department of Social Services for referrals, she finds licensing helpful, partly because it is a means of getting children and because she feels it gives her peace of mind [18]. Unlike Mrs. Glen and Mrs. Bond, most of her referrals come from the Department; she charges the allotted amount for welfare families, $20.00 a week for school age and $25.00 for younger children (of the latter, she says: *They're more work -- well, not work, really)*. Although $20.00 is more than Mrs. Bond and about the same as Mrs. Glen, charges, she actually makes less than the other family day care mothers because in such a small space she can only take one or two children at a time. Expenses are heaviest in the food category since she serves breakfast, lunch and snacks daily. In response to our question: *Do you know the cost to you of taking care of a school age child?* She replied, *No -- but I guessed that we were losing money. They sure eat an awful lot!* We asked if she knew about taking income tax deductions for child care; no, she didn't, nor does she take account of the expense involved in her four trips to school each day, too far for the children to walk.

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[18] Like many family day care mothers she cared for neighborhood children before she knew she had to be licensed: *There were always kids in the house.* She applied for a license when an unlicensed friend was sued by a parent: *I found out you can get in hot water.*

Education is important to Mrs. Torres. Not only is it a means of social and economic mobility but it satisfies an inner need for knowledge; when her older neighbors ask her why she gets involved in such things as ECE she tells them: *Because I like to learn.* Pacific Oaks was a familiar name to her. Because she knows school personnel in her district, she was able to get her own children transferred to a better school, farther away than the one they were assigned to near home. She goes to a multitude of school meetings, taking the children along with her: *I take them everywhere with me, I think it's good for them to be exposed to different things.* Her best training for family day care, she feels, beyond the experience at school as a room mother and in the ECE program, and as Brownie troop leader and in summer camps, was a child study class sponsored by the city Adult Education Department (*I went to meetings at night -- we had many speakers, psychologists, child care experts. . .).* She wishes more family day care mothers would get involved in child development studies. Her close relationship with teachers means she can keep close track of the children's progress in school. She counseled the mother of one child who was having problems fighting in school to take him out of family day care and to keep him home with her. The mother took her advice, and the child stopped fighting.

At home, Mrs. Torres keeps the children involved in craft projects; she frowns on TV, pointing out that *they need to keep busy.* Frequently she has Brownie meetings and includes the family day care children in their activities; she pointed out to us several boxes of paper bunnies they had made for Easter. She took a cake decorating class, and all the children participated in making and decorating cakes and cookies for special occasions. During the remainder of the time the children are at Mrs. Torres' they nap *(they need it and want it -- they really get tired)*, eat *(a lot!)*, do home work *(I help if they ask)* and ride bikes with neighborhood children who come over. They are not allowed out of Mrs. Torres' sight, however: *I really feel responsible for them.* The yard itself is tiny; it could not support more than one or two day care children comfortably, particularly not active older boys.

Mrs. Torres' parent relationships begin with strangers and often end with close friends. The mothers whose children she takes are more apt to need advice or help than those who come to Mrs. Bond's or Mrs. Glen's. She often talks with them about the children's behavior, asking about the children's sleeping and eating habits. She lets them know about medical problems she observes in the children and may suggest that they take the child to the doctor. When a mother first comes, she is apt to ask only if Mrs. Torres is licensed and how she disciplines the children. Mrs. Torres tells her she doesn't restrict them: *They can mess up the house all they want as long as they pick up after themselves.* She tells parents that if she and the child can get along for two weeks, she will keep him; that they should feel free to drop by any time they want. Her only questions are whether the children are allergic to any foods or cats, since the Torres' household includes Fluffy, a beautiful furry feline. She says she has never had any problem with parents, adding: *I've always been lucky. I've even had some pay in advance.*

Mrs. Torres' recommendations on how to improve licensing coincide on at least three points with those of Mrs. Bond and Mrs. Glen. Put succinctly, they are:

1) Change unrealistic regulations on the numbers and ages of children a family day care mother may take: *They're not flexible enough; needs change almost daily.*

2) Get more qualified, better trained licensing workers: *I had a good worker before. The one I have now is a lemon -- all he can talk about is his traffic tickets. He has had no background with children.*

3) Check out family day care mothers themselves more thoroughly: *There's no screening, no questions asked. I've heard of bad family day care mothers -- they (the licensing workers) should drop in unannounced to see what you do with the children* 19/

In conclusion, all of these women think of themselves as teachers, and eventually, as their own children grow older they may find employment in some educational setting outside of the home. Women who find the professional role appealing and who enjoy the complexity which a more professional conceptualization of role involves may not stay with the role of family day care mother forever.

19/ Frequently the family day care mothers with whom we spoke referred to "bad" FDCM's. Occasionally it was the result of a personal encounter; more often, we suspected, it was merely a continuation of the myths circulated about family day care, given credence by its invisibility. Usually "bad" care was equated with unlicensed care, but not always. Many FDCM's were quick to point out that often homes were not licensed not because the caregiver was incompetent -- indeed, they complained that licensing often ignores this aspect -- but that she wouldn't put up with the bureaucratic hassle involved in becoming licensed. Our position tends to be that, as with children, the question is less one of "bad" family day care mothers than of failure on the part of responsible others to encourage sound growth and development, particularly of resources.

CHAPTER IX

"FILLING THE NEST" -- SATISFACTIONS IN A MOTHERING ROLE

In his study of family day care, Arthur Emlen has suggested that women whose own children are grown but who still thrive in the maternal role can extend their 'families' through the day care process, thus meeting their own needs for fulfillment as well as those of working mothers for older, experienced caregivers. We were struck by the large number of older women in our study whose grown children had left home and who seemed to be 'filling the nest' with family day care children as a means of satisfying their continuing need for mothering. Many of these family day care mothers have dedicated their lives to being good wives and mothers and derive a great deal of comfort and fulfillment from a familiar role. Family day care allowed them to continue established life-style patterns and relieved the boredom and loneliness of empty, child-less homes 1/. A number of them had grandchildren of their own who were regular or part-time members of the family day care group.

These family day care mothers appeared to enjoy playing "grandma" not only to the children but to their families, dispensing the common-sense wisdom they had acquired over years of maternal experience. Because the family had been the central sustaining unit which gave structure to their own lives and that of their children, they seemed deeply committed to giving firm support -- as well as love -- to other children for whom they felt it was sorely lacking. These were the family day care mothers who appeared to have eagerly taken on what we saw as the "grandma" role.

Perhaps because these family day care mothers derived their greatest pleasure from the affection very young children are more likely to give, they tended to prefer caring for infants and preschoolers rather than school age. They seemed to like the comparative tractability and eagerness to learn of little ones as opposed to the independent freedom-seeking older child, feeling the first strong surge of rebellion towards authority and often perceived by adults as "hard-headed" and "smart-alecky". Some of the older family day care mothers, frustrated at their inability to cope with physically active, recalcitrant school-agers, tended to be more restrictive, resorting to a more authoritarian mode of limit-setting. One reason may be the necessity for the physical and psychological closeness of children to meet their own affective needs. It may occur because they have a more difficult time keeping track of the more active older child. It may also sometimes be because they belong to an older generation in which moral principles and prescriptions for behavior were more absolute.

Space, too, seemed a problem in the homes of some of the "grandmas" we visited; because physical setting often seemed to have shrunk with family size and changing personal needs as the life cycle advanced, these homes seemed to be less well-suited for older children's needs. The strong pull, generated by parental urgings, to take children sometimes conflicts with the push of small areas, which can support only one or two children comfortably 2/. In some cases, smaller spaces are not a problem, given a creative use of facilities at hand. In one family day care home the children used the nearby school recreation program daily. In another, the setting was ideal for one not-too-physically active girl, who was thriving in a soft, relaxed, individually-oriented environment which had a variety of choices to meet her particular needs 3/.

Although caregivers in this group tend to be more limited in physical resources -- many do not drive, homes are often smaller, they may tire more easily -- still there is a great deal of

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1/ For most of these women -- and probably their husbands too -- the rewards of doing family day care are primarily the return of their love and affection through the smiles and hugs of the children. Often their living rooms overflow with pictures of "their" children; they told us with great pride of the visits that some, now adolescents, continue to make regularly.

2/ For the most part we felt Emlen's theory (Emlen, 1971b) about "clutch size" to be supported: family day caregivers, like mother hens, tend to naturally limit the brood to the number they can comfortably handle. We felt that over-population tends to arise primarily when the need for care is pressing or money is a motivating factor. In our sample we saw some evidence of the former but as far as we could tell none of the latter.

3/ We would suggest that "grandma" family day care mothers seem to be especially well-suited to giving care to one or two shy, sensitive, not-too-physically active children who need an especially warm supportive home environment in which to gain confidence and a feeling of belonging.

warmth and caregiving skill. While average age is higher than among other caregivers, a number are what we have termed "young grandmas", still full of energy and enthusiasm and new ideas 4/.

Mrs. Price -- Community Grandmother

One such lady, with five grown children and uncounted grandchildren, had day care children ranging in age from two to sixteen. She had no age preferences; *It's a toss-up,* she told us. *Each (age group) has its own idiosyncrasies. Preschoolers require more attention but older children are more independent.* For her, discipline is a very important feature of child care; in this case we would guess it is because she has a large group. Her relationship with families is clearly that of a very active grandmother; she talks to them frequently on the phone, does clothing alterations for them, cuts the children's hair, has them all over to her house for barbecues. The interviewer, noting parenthetically that Mrs. Price's dining area is full of her "Rogue's Gallery", pictures of relatives and day care children she has had, comments:

> *. . . Children are expected to be responsible for themselves and for each other. Even two's take their own clothes off for a nap, fold them in a stack, then bring them out for help in dressing when they wake up. The older children help dress the younger ones and watch them outside, as well as do chores like emptying the trash and picking up after the dog -- the kids are included in daily family routines. If Mrs. Price is baking or sewing, so are the kids. Once she planned a huge family reunion in a park -- 70 people or so -- and her family day care kids went along for the picnic* 5/.

Mrs. Price, thriving on her family day care experiences and the enjoyment she gets out of *knowing she is helping bring up kids well,* gave no indications of quitting. Some of the older family day care mothers who had been caring for children for many years appeared ready to stop when present arrangements ended and join their husbands in retirement. Others like Mrs. Vance, whose reputation as substitute "grandma" is apparently widespread in her community, looked as if they might go on forever.

Mrs. Vance: "The Need to be Needed" 6/

Shortly after the end of World War II Mrs. Vance, now a grey-haired grandmother, took in her first child, a two-year-old abandoned by her mother:

> *I bought clothes for her, made her a little coat and cap -- The father didn't seem to appreciate all the things I had done for nothing, so I decided I'd get my license. I figured if I was going to take care of children -- which I love doing -- I was going to get paid for it!*

Today, twenty-six years later, she still does family day care, more for love than money; her charge for two brothers, one preschool and one school age, is $5.00 a day. Mrs. Vance is an old-fashioned, no-nonsense, velvet-hand-in-iron glove woman whose deep love for children does not blind her to the importance of limit-setting. A matriarchal figure, pillar of a rapidly vanishing social structure which derived its great strength from the family and the church -- both still all-important to Mrs. Vance -- she flourishes in the "grandma" role.

4/ On the basis of our experience, age alone is not a critical factor in good child care. One vital family day care mother, whom we guessed to be at least 75, was still going strong and we hoped for the sake of the children she would continue that way, God and her licensing worker willing. Others sounded weary and defeated in their thirties. A positive outlook on life and a continuing ability to marshal resources, including good health, seemed to be more important variables than chronological age.

5/ These comments underline an important point: school age children can achieve an important sense of self-worth and responsibility by "helping" care for younger children and participating in the real work that goes with daily living and with special events. Family day care mothers recognize this experience as especially valuable for those who have no siblings in their own families.

6/ "The fashionable insistence on dramatizing the dependence of children on adults often blinds us to the dependence of the older generation on the younger one. Mature man needs to be needed . . ." (Erikson 1963, p. 266.)

Mrs. Vance sat in her postage-stamp sized living room, surrounded by the objects -- sequined butterflies made out of egg cartons, crocheted placemats -- she makes to keep her active hands busy, and told us directly that she had more children (two part-timers, including one who comes at 4:30 a.m.) than her license allows, but the children need the care: *I've taken them because I couldn't turn the children down. One's mother is an alcoholic in jail -- the father has to go to work to make a living.*

Parents find Mrs. Vance by word of mouth; after 26 years of doing child care in the same neighborhood, she knows the community well and is part of a vast informal communications network of family day care mothers. One of the few women we spoke with who is an active member of a family day care organization, she keeps in touch regularly with other caregivers. She had a reciprocal back-up arrangement with a family day care mother next door who frequently asked her advice (*She couldn't talk with her own mother)* until her neighbor moved recently. When parents, desperate for care, first come to her, they don't ask her questions *(. . . they're just glad to find me)* but she has very definite requirements for them: *Parents must be willing to let me discipline. I ground the children on the couch if they've disobeyed, if they've gone somewhere without telling me. . .* The key to Mrs. Vance's success seems to be lots of love along with absolute clarity of expectations and strict enforcement of rules. She told us that the thing she likes most about doing family day care is*: The children -- I love 'em! I'm sweet but firm. They need discipline -- many of them don't get any love or discipline at home. I saw to it that my own three kids, including the boys, learned to cook and do household chores at the age of nine...*

The family day care children range in age from two to seven, including two sets of siblings 7/. All except the two year old have been with her for two to four years 8/. She takes any age child *(They're all in need of love and care)* but children usually come to her not as school-agers but as infants and preschoolers, and she "trains" them and their parents as they grow up in her care. She has established firm rules about hours *(You have to or you get taken advantage of -- that's why I have no problems):*

> *I tell parents I won't take children in the evening, on weekends or overnight because otherwise it only encourages them to run off to Tijuana or Las Vegas -- a parent's place is at home when they're not working. I've always stayed home -- they should, too!*

Mrs. Vance confided that she does provide these services in an emergency. She's proud of the care she gives sick children, which she sees clearly as an important part of the mothering process. She told us in detail of the time when all five children she was caring for had chicken pox; she asked the mother for calamine lotion and baking soda, lined the children up assembly-line style and bathed and powdered them. She has run vaporizers so many times, she noted, *I might as well have a hospital.*

For the school age children the physical setting at the Vance's is extremely limited. She almost never goes out with them except to her mother's. Although the day we visited she was taking the children, none of whom, she pointed out, get religious training at home, to church with her for Ash Wednesday services. Neighborhood children do not come to play, since there are none *(They're all older people in the neighborhood)* and the family day care children are never allowed to go to other homes *(I have to know exactly where they are. Perhaps I'd let them go if I knew the home and the family 9/.)* The children normally walk to school a block away; when it rains Mr. Vance drops them off and Mrs. Vance picks them up in the car. The house itself is tiny, the yard tinier; there is a very small playroom off the garage where Mrs. Vance works on her projects while watching the children, but no yard to speak of in which to play.

7/ Mrs. Vance considers it very important that the family group remain intact and siblings not be separated from one another by being placed in different day care homes.

8/ She told us proudly that two of her former family day care children, now grown up *(one's six feet tall now)* still come to visit her: *They were nineteen months and three months when I took them. I hemmed their mother's dress so she could go to work.*

9/ We sensed, too, that family day care mothers felt they had to be cautious about allowing children out alone on the streets lest they add fuel to the municipal day care fire. Mrs. Vance's city is one which fought to have family day care restricted to R-4 and commercial zones, claiming noise, nuisance, a blight to residential areas. Mrs. Vance herself took part in a march on city hall -- with all the children -- to successfully fight the attempt to banish family day care; *The city retaliated,* she notes, *by charging a fee for a business license.*

The saving grace for the older children is the excellent (according to Mrs. Vance) program at the school and park: *There's so much going on in this community,* she told us, as she described the daily 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. activities at school which involved such lures as a candy hunt, Carom board tournament, baseball game and candy apple sale. We asked if the supervision was adequate, noting that other family day care mothers had not found this to be the case at their schools: *Oh, yes, indeed,* was her response, *the children have to check in every day. They have very careful supervision; they keep track of daily attendance and award certificates at the end of the year.* The two boys return to school at 3:00 p.m. each day after coming home to Mrs. Vance's to change their clothes and have a snack. Outside of the hour they spend there in the morning eating *(I insist they have breakfast as soon as they come in the morning)* and watching TV *(I won't turn it on until they've eaten!)* they do not play at Mrs. Vance's except on rainy days when they play cards, or listen to the phonograph and sing. On school holidays they go with Mrs. Vance to the park.

We wondered what happened to this arrangement in the summer. When we called, we found two of the boys, seven and three, had moved out of the state; two of the four year olds, now turned five and going to school in the fall, were still in care, and a new little preschool girl had arrived. The hours and days the children came were irregular; we found it difficult to keep track of them all. One of them was enrolled in summer school. The activities at the school, locked up for the summer, had been replaced by those at the park, half-a-dozen blocks away. Main events apparently were water play (Slippy Slide, water balloons), and eating (wienie bake, watermelon feed). Mornings the children spent at the Vance's sleeping or playing games such as checkers, Yahtze and dominoes -- which Mrs. Vance plays with them -- or doing remedial school work. She works with the children on the latter in an informal way, such as counting objects and playing word games. Occasionally the group goes to Mrs. Vance's daughter-in-law's to swim.

Because the supervised school recreation program is not in operation, Mrs. Vance is much more involved with the children during the summer; *they want to go to the park all the time* she told us, and she must go with them. There are fees for park activities, including crafts, which she pays, although her summer charge to parents remains the same. Continuity of care is not interrupted in the summer as it is in some family day care arrangements. The Vance's never go on vacation; illness is no problem since she has plenty of back-up help she can call on, for which the local day care association she belongs to is particularly useful.

After nearly three decades of child care, licensing poses no obstacles for Mrs. Vance:

> *Of course when I first became licensed there was nothing to it -- it was a simple thing. I don't know about it now. I do feel licensing is something you need to do for the children's sake, no matter how tough it is -- children are worth it. Besides it's protection -- if somebody gets nasty I can call up the department.*

Could they really help? we enquired, to which she replied: *Oh, I don't know. I just don't think I'll ever have a problem.*

She has become aware of growing costs of providing care; comparing her parent fees to those suggested by the day care association she speculated that she *probably wasn't charging enough* 10/. Increasing efforts to regulate and tax family day care mothers seem to be disturbing her, less perhaps for herself than as for the effect it will have in discouraging other present and potential family day care mothers: *We need more mothers,* she emphasized, *to take care of children.*

Mrs. Vance obviously takes enormous pride in having "raised" so many children and having perfected so many skills over the years in carrying out her role as community "grandma". Before we left she showed us two albums of pictures of her extended family, day care as well as natural. Her parting comment, delivered with the clear ring of authority: *You know you have to have a special license to take twins!* reflected the strong sense of mastery and self-esteem Mrs. Vance has developed in the nearly thirty years she has been a family day care mother.

10/ The prices suggested by the association included a fee of $25.00 a week for one child, $37.50 for two in one family and $2.00 an hour overtime. Twenty dollars per week was recommended for one child before and after school and $30.00 per week for two children before and after school, as well as an hourly rate of 75¢ per hour per child part time and 75¢ for lunch per day per child. It was also recommended that if a child was taken out of care for a vacation that the parent pay one half of the regular fee even though the child was not cared for during that time. Suggested paid holidays included New Years, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Mrs. Ortiz -- A Traditional Definition of Women's Role

Mrs. Ortiz, nearly twenty years Mrs. Vance's junior, also thrives in the role of substitute "grandma". Her home, unlike the Vance's middle-class suburban dwelling, is located in an old and very poor urban section of Los Angeles whose Spanish-speaking population is composed primarily of Mexican-American famililies like the Ortiz'. Most members of the older generation in the Ortiz' neighborhood were born in Mexico. Mrs. Ortiz herself speaks English fluently. Her house, which she shares with her husband and youngest child, is small and immaculate. It is located only a block away from the school from which six year Jorge, the only school age child out of four for whom Mrs. Ortiz was caring (the others were four and three years, and seven months), walks from his kindergarten every day at noon, staying at Mrs. Ortiz' until 4:00 p.m.

Generally, Mrs. Ortiz doesn't take new school age children -- not because she doesn't want them *(age doesn't matter; I enjoy children of all ages, although toddlers with their grabbing are kind of hard)* but because her calls are mostly for infants. With money a scarce resource, parents in this area usually reserve it for care of very young children. Mrs. Ortiz herself actually derives greater enjoyment from taking the children as babies and watching them grow and develop. She has taken care of many infants until they began school. Jorge himself has been with her six years, since he was a baby. Most arrangements last four or five years, until parents take their children out of care when they enter kindergarten.

Over the period of 16 years Mrs. Ortiz has been doing family day care she has developed a wide circle of friends, neighbors and parents of former children who refer families to her. She gets 'a lot' of calls from the Department of Social Services office, often for the care of children whose parents are "on welfare". With all of them, she likes to be a grandmother figure, providing support and guidance for the parents as well as the children. Few ask about the kind of care she gives *(They trust my judgment)*; questions usually center around whether she provides meals (she provides lunch and a snack) and the cost ($20.00 a week or $4.00 a day for all ages, the DPSS allotment for school age children in AFDC families). She is careful to let parents know that she is a *good kind woman who gives a lot of loving and provides a nice loving home atmosphere.*

Mrs. Ortiz, a grandmother at 45, began her parenting experience -- the only training she has had for family day care -- early; her oldest child is now 28. She started doing family day care because, she explained, she loves children and needed to find some way for earning money at home because she had children of her own and times were hard. Cultural mores and a strong attachment to the mothering role as well as her children's needs dictated that she stay at home; family day care was a logical choice. The 'grandma' role she now plays meets her present needs beautifully; now that three of her four children are grown (one, an eight year old, is still at home) she can "fill the nest" with others' children. The interviewer notes:

> *She speaks of all her children -- her own and those she takes care of -- fondly and looks on her experiences as a family day care mother as very rewarding and enjoyable. She doesn't have any real problems -- those she does have she doesn't consider serious because they're the same problems any mother has. Due to her many years of doing family day care Mrs. Ortiz seems well in control of herself and any situation that might arise. She is very sure of her ability to take care of children. . .*

By both preference and necessity, Mrs. Ortiz leads a confined existence. Like most mothers in the neighborhood she does not drive a car and seldom leaves the house, except to walk to the drugstore for medicine if the children are ill. Even if she did have a car she would probably not use it since the other family day care children are small 11/. Jorge's activities are thus fairly limited. He spends every afternoon at Mrs. Ortiz' home, summer and winter, playing on the swings, watching TV, looking at books. During the school year Mrs. Ortiz insists that he nap, at his mother's request: *He gets up very early in the morning to go to school -- he needs his rest.* He plays with the younger children a great deal, often helping Mrs. Ortiz take care of them: *Jorge is very helpful -- he gets along fine with the younger children, helping me feed them and change them.* It is doubtful Jorge lacks for entertainment. Mrs. Ortiz apparently loves to do things with the children and makes elaborate preparations, including decorating the house, for holidays; she was getting ready for Easter, with Jorge's help, when we spoke with her.

11/ This apparently is a real problem for family day care mothers with mixed age groups. Generally those who have younger children do not attempt to go out during the day, thus limiting the experiences of the school age children. If they have children under three, of course, they do not legally have children older than six so that this may not be a major problem, but it does mean the five and six year olds are restricted in their movement, especially if the family day care home is small.

The question of licensing did not elicit much response from Mrs. Ortiz. She has apparently never thought about it much except that yearly renewal is a hassle, particularly for Mr. Ortiz who has to lose valuable time off work to be X-rayed. It is difficult for her, too, because she has to leave the house: *I'm too busy with the children.* She does find licensing helpful in the referrals it provides; she has always had *plenty of applicants and phone calls.* After sixteen years she feels she has no problems but that if she did, she could call her day care consultant 12/.

Mrs. Ortiz obviously does not see her role as confining. Her "need to be needed" is being amply filled by the day care children; 'women's liberation' is not in her vocabulary. As a setting for school age children, in general, the Ortiz' home provides only limited choices. As a warm, supportive second home for Jorge, undboutedly enjoying his unique status with the younger children and fortified by Mrs. Ortiz' love and devotion, it is probably *muy bueno.*

Mrs. Sanchez: "Filling the Nest" -- Some Limitations

Mrs. Sanchez has been surrounded by children, or wanted to be, all her life; indeed, children are her life. Her strong maternal urges were given expression early. The eldest child in a large Mexican-American family, she helped her mother raise fourteen brothers and sisters. The experience was put to good use in rearing her own two children, an eighteen year old girl and a twelve year old boy, but the hunger for children lingers on. She has thought of doing foster care but is not sure she could face the emotional trauma of having a child taken out of her care. She has even considered adopting another child. Now 40 and divorced, she feels she is too old to have another herself and has no plans to remarry. We believe Mrs. Sanchez clearly demonstrates the "filling the nest" syndrome. Family day care provides an ideal means for satisfying such affective needs; it has given Mrs. Sanchez a chance for fulfillment she could not otherwise have, without added responsibilities.

When we spoke with her in March, she had only two family day care children, six years and one year old, and wanted two more since the two sisters she had been caring for had moved away. (We were reminded of the problem which taking more than one child from a family presents. When the family moves, the family day care mother loses them all). From September to October she had received a number of calls, but had had none since January 13/.

Mrs. Sanchez talked about some of the problems that concerned her as a family day care mother on welfare who also takes welfare families. Her house is very small and the yard inadequate. The landlord lives on the rear of the lot and objects to the children riding trikes and playing ball because it might "bruise" the grass. The interviewer comments:

> *Mrs. Sanchez is very conscientious about the care she offers the children. She is concerned that her house is too small and the yard too limiting. She would like to move to a larger house in the area; that raised some questions about licensing. Would her license expire when she moves? if so, what would she do with the children she is caring for now?*
>
> *She wants to provide much more equipment for the children. She can't afford to until she gets more children and more money comes in. She hopes to get educational toys in addition to the regular play materials.*
>
> *Mrs. Sanchez had one bad experience with a mother who skipped town owing her a week's pay. She reported her to the welfare agency because the mother was on welfare, too, but it didn't do any good; they couldn't locate her either. The same mother had brought the child to her one morning badly bruised on her buttocks. Mrs. Sanchez immediately called in nearby friends to witness the bruises and sign a paper as witnesses. She reported the beating to her social worker and then confronted the mother who said the little girl deserved the beating and would get another if she didn't watch out.*

12/ Mrs. Ortiz was one of those few family day care mothers, not in the majority, who could differentiate between licensing worker and consultant and, moreover, mention the latter by name.

13/ There may be more than mere coincidence between this and the fact that there were many vacancies and a high turnover rate in some of the consultant positions at the time we began interviewing in February. By July all the area consultants were gone; only five remained in a central Los Angeles office. We suggest that 'no calls' does not necessarily mean 'no demand' but may reflect poor referral service.

Mrs. Sanchez had been concerned not only for the little girl's welfare, but afraid that the parent would accuse her of beating the child. From this incident she learned to be very careful to note bruises on children. She has warned her many friends who are family day care mothers to do the same. She also learned to ask for payment in advance.

Except for this and one other unfortunate incident with non-payment, she has had no real problems with parents; relationships usually develop into close friendships. Mrs. Sanchez visits families in their own homes and buys presents for the children which she delivers in person. Parents often ask her advice about what to do with the children, particularly with respect to "bad habits".

Mrs. Sanchez appears to be the local unofficial day care consultant. She was the first in the neighborhood to be licensed four years ago (because her own social worker told her it was required) and since then she has talked some friends in the neighborhood into becoming licensed. Frequently she provides back-up services to other family day care mothers when they need temporary care for their family day care children. She and her friends apparently compare notes regularly on their experiences. Listening to her recount her handling of the battered child incident, we suspected that she could provide some valuable counsel.

Mrs. Sanchez really prefers to take younger children for several reasons. Young children are all day children, and all day children mean more money. In addition, she worries about the children when they're walking to and from school: the street is wide and busy. We suspect there is a third reason: Younger children are more satisfying in terms of the love they return to the family day care mother.

CHAPTER X

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CARETAKER

We ask the reader to keep in mind the fact that the role descriptions we suggest are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Boundaries are not always clear cut. A family day care mother with grown children may prefer school age children; one who needs the money may nevertheless give good care. Our thesis is simply that certain kinds of services and styles of care are associated with characteristics of certain groups of caregivers.

With this caution we propose a second type which seems to cross all age, ethnic and socioeconomic lines. Family day care mothers in this group, who might be identified as performing the Social Caretaker role, seem bound by a commitment, conscious or not, to meeting the social and, as they see it, moral needs of children and families, particularly those who are one-parent. Their past experiences as members of large extended families and as mothers themselves stand them in good stead; they are conditioned by their own life styles to be strongly family-oriented.

The primary motivation for doing family day care is often expressed as a desire to help children have a happy, stable, home-away-from home where they can send down roots and know they are cared for (Mrs. Glen, the reader may recall, had some of these feelings). Some, active in church affairs, derive their attitudes from strong religious ties. Carried to an extreme, the dedication to strengthening moral values can reach a missionary zeal which may be overly restrictive. For the most part, we felt that the concern of family day care mothers for giving children clearly-defined structure and a stable value system in an extended family environment, particularly where it coincided with parental wishes, was a valuable service.

This seemed particularly true in cases where the children strongly suspected, as one family day care mother put it, *that they were not wanted.* Often the primary source of referrals for these family day care homes is the Department of Public Social Services, which means the probability of getting more one-parent families, many of them on welfare, with a variety of pressing needs, is greater than where children come from friends, or friends of friends, through word of mouth. The incidence of broken homes, battered children and parents who skip out without paying tends to be higher. The family day care mother needs some specific coping skills for these problems, and may need outside support; if she doesn't have one or the other, role strain and drain may cause her to give up family day care, or worse, give poor care.

On the other hand she may be the neighborhood or church "caretaker" to whom residents or members turn as guardian of the child, psychologically as well as physically, in the parent's absence. She may see herself in a specialized role such as that of supervisor, in contrast to the more physical-need-orientation function of women who take care of infants and very young children. Occasionally the family day care mother assumes responsibility for religious guidance of the child, formally through Bible study classes or informally through the rules by which children are expected to abide. (This need not necessarily be authoritarian; one Mormon household holds a weekly meeting, which includes the family day care children, to discuss plans and problems).

The main difference, it seemed to us, between the "Not just a sitter" and the Social Care-Taker is the function care-giving fulfills in meeting the affective needs of the caregivers themselves as well as those of the children. Family day care is not a business to these women but an important social service; by meeting others' needs, they meet their own needs for caring. Money is seldom mentioned except to indicate how much they return to families in the process of buying the children clothes, taking them on outings, paying doctor bills, etc. With Social Caretakers the need for money does not appear to be a prime motive for doing family day care 1/. Some of the most dedicated caregivers, particularly with respect to long-term commitment, are to be found in this group. Only as an educated guess, we might propose that the odds for these family day care mothers continuing to give care would be greater than for any others 2/.

1/ Perhaps this statement should be qualified. Many family day care mothers who formerly would not have thought about the monetary aspect are being forced into it because of inflation. Some pointed out they will have to raise fees for the first time since they began doing family day care, although they are disturbed by the prospect for the parents' sake.

2/ An exception may be those who get a special license and go into care of up to ten children.

Mrs. Cary: Helping Children Send Down Roots

Mrs. Cary and her husband have been picking up the pieces left by collapsing social structures for twenty years, fifteen of them devoted to foster care of emotionally disturbed children. During those years she learned, through wrenching personal experiences, how to meet the developmental needs of older as well as younger children, bruised and battered by the double handicap of poverty and emotional deprivation. Her career as family day care mother began when a little neighborhood boy appeared at her door one day, crying and alone, obviously needing care. Because the county wouldn't allow her to do both foster care and family day care, she gave up the former, and when we spoke with her she had five boys between the ages of five and nine. Two of these were special needs children, one *a very angry child,* whose outbursts have left many of the Cary's household furnishings in tatters.

Once an office manager, Mrs. Cary approaches all her commitments, family and day care, with formidable efficiency (when we arrived for the interview, she half-jokingly commented: *I should send you back -- you're ten minutes early!*) She has built up her well-organized referral system carefully over the last four years, keeping a coded card file of potential careseekers which she gleans from the neighborhood newspaper *(the other papers are no help -- the territory they cover is too stretched out)* and responses from her ads on bulletin boards in the neighborhood laundromat and in the local community college. Next to these local sources most of her calls come from the Department of Social Services; calls for school age care tend to come from the school principal. All the families she serves are one-parent *(they're on the increase)* [3]. When parents first come she lets them know she is interested in helping the child grow, to produce, not in the academic sense, but as a total human being, to send down roots. This, she told us, is what she likes most about doing family day care, to establish a second home for children where they can develop stable relationships. She describes what she does as a multi-care service; it could equally be characterized as multi-service care.

Now that her own two sons, 21 and 18, are grown, Mrs. Cary has completely devoted her expertise as mother, businesswoman and lay social worker to developing an environment in which children can send down those roots. The physical setting lends itself perfectly. There is a bathroom and bedroom, no longer used by her eldest son, with two beds and shelves full of toys, set aside for the exclusive use of children: *I like to keep them over night for their own sake, if mother is going to be -- uh -- entertaining gentlemen friends* [4]. The yard is a delight for active boys, part dirt, part grass, with many trees and a cement patio: *In the summer I set this up with lounges and a table with an umbrella -- it's great for resting on a warm afternoon.* Here on the patio she sets up splash pools, lets the boys sail toy boats, play with bubbles, squirt guns, set up the toy refrigerator and stove and play house with dolls if they wish: *If boys want it, I feel they need it.* Activity includes a great deal of dramatic play as well as large and small muscle games (playing ball, Red-light Green-light, bean bag games), arts and crafts, construction with large building blocks, riding scooters and unfocused things such as just plain digging in the dirt. One of the difficulties is that the dirt often ends up in such places as the neighbors' yard. Because there is so much to do at home, and so much space to do it in, Mrs. Cary seldom takes them on field trips, but they do go out shopping and for lunch, sometimes picnicking in the park in the summer.

Mrs. Cary, with her concern for meeting children's developmental needs, has some different views on what is desirable or acceptable behavior for children. Many family day care mothers frown on children's bringing their own toys because of the friction it often causes; if they do bring things they are required to share. Mrs. Cary has another approach: *Yes, they can bring their own things as long as they are responsible for them. They don't have to share. They have the right to decide what to do with their possessions; the next fellow has the same right.*

If the children want to earn a little pocket money they can rake leaves, but it is not mandatory; the only thing they must do is pick up after themselves. Mrs. Cary feels that the park is too dangerous for the younger boys to play in alone, but she gives permission for the older ones to walk to one nearby, under certain conditions.

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[3] She used to have children an average of three and a half years but turnover is increasing: *The economy is changing -- everything is in a state of uncertainty. . .* She had one child whose mother had a nervous breakdown; he is now back at home.

[4] She regularly takes care of children in the evenings and on weekends as well: *I'm set up to meet the parents' needs.* If a child is just feeling sniffly, she will keep him, but if he has a temperature, is seriously ill and feeling miserable she feels he needs his mother.

> *I tell them what time they must be home. If they want to go to a friend's house I have a rule: the child must make the arrangements along with his mother and he must get the telephone number himself. This way he learns responsibility. I like to give them a framework; it gives them a chance to learn limits and self-discipline. Letting them go other places channels school age children into outside activities.*

Mrs. Cary knows how to set reasonable limits in order to keep things going smoothly 5/. Although the children may play at other homes, other children are not allowed to come to Mrs. Cary's. *It's too much responsibility and too much of a hassle for me -- there are so many complications. I must set limits for my own self-interest as well as the children's.* Her own life must be well-ordered to accommodate the day care schedule which takes up every afternoon from 12:00 to 6:00 p.m. Every other week she takes two days to go to the market, the bank, and stores. Shopping for food is a major consumer of time and money; her milk bill for one month for the day care children last summer was $27.00. She points out:

> *These children need good food and lots of it -- their parents don't feed them properly. Fortunately my husband can bring home nutritious things to eat from his job (in the food industry). I give them lots of protein, besides milk, cookies and fruit. I won't cut on food costs.*

Parent relationships are warm and friendly, "more than business like". She feels that interest in them and in the children is essential to a good arrangement. Before she accepts a child she makes certain she can work with the parent; basic trust is essential to the relationship: *I can't help a child if I can't relate to the parent. The most important thing is that they be honest with me.* They often ask her advice and help concerning the children's behavior both at home and at school *(I have two problems right now)* and their own personal problems. She encourages them to learn, to look at the child and observe him carefully to understand his behavior. Every parent, she believes, should be required to take a class in child development. She herself, eager to learn, has taken enough child development courses at the local community college to qualify for a Children's Center permit.

Mrs. Cary sees family day care as a particularly effective way of de-schooling child care, especially for older children. She keeps the environment as relaxed, unfocused, rich for creative play and just plain "fun" as possible. Homework is not emphasized, although she looks at papers to see if the child is "producing": *They have too much structure in school; they don't need it here. They need to feel the wind, look at the grass and the birds and trees, to watch a man building a bird house.* She discouraged one mother from sending her child to summer school because he was unhappy there, jealous of the other children at Mrs. Cary's having the fun he was missing out on. (In addition, the private bus line which transported the children to school had gone out of business and the mother could not afford the daily worry and expense which using a taxi service would entail). The child, back with Mrs. Cary, was happy again; so was she, to see him content and relaxed.

Her years of working with children have made her highly perceptive of their needs, and she tries to educate parents concerning those needs. Very much against nursery schools where children get no love and affection *(I walk in and they're clinging to my skirt)*, she lets parents know that older children need care too 6/. She has strong feelings about parents who take children out of family day care at too early an age, leaving them home alone without supervision.

> *I had one little girl whose ten year old brother was left at home alone. The parents didn't think he needed supervision. Now he's about to enter junior high and they're having problems with him. Instead of putting him into a family day care home they took her out. So now he's filled with resentment at being saddled with the care of a younger sister.*

Her comments about licensing were predictable:

> *Licensing? It's a good thing, but I could work without it. It's a protection for the child, and some people look for that word, but -- I have heard of a woman who has 30 children -- well, that's not good certainly, but the children are still better off at home with her than alone and neglected.*

5/ The living room is off limits for play except for quiet times alone with Mrs. Cary or a book before mothers pick up. Mrs. Cary snorts at her licensing worker's objection: *He doesn't have five rambunctious boys like I do!*

6/ Commenting on a preschool near her which has extended its operations to include upper grades, she deplores the move: *This will mean pressured school-type summer programs too. It's the worst nursery school in the area.*

> *We need places for home child care -- the agency shouldn't penalize family day care mothers with foolish rules and restrictions. The workers are picky; they have no understanding of children's needs and they change their ideas every time they come -- I prefer women to men licensing workers; the men don't understand enough about child care, the needs of the children and family day care mothers. My worker said: 'You need more wheel toys'. I can't afford expensive equipment; I'm trying to keep my prices down for working mothers* [7].

Her feelings about the failure of governmental agencies to facilitate good child care by coordinating services are equally strong. The refusal of county agencies to work with state, or foster care to work with day care, she finds foolish: *Instead of working together for the good of the children, each works in its own separate corner. They're losing sight of the main objective: the child.* Mrs. Cary was particularly depressed about the family day care situation when we contacted her in the summer. She told us she had lost three children and had no replacements:

> *The picture is falling apart. It's partly the disintegrating family structure* [8], *partly the economy; reducing the number of consultants from thirty-six to five was very bad. We desperately need the referral service; I've gotten nothing from (local sources) recently. What's the point of spending money on licensing if no referrals are being made? Soon there'll be no homes.*
>
> *I'm going to try to hold out until fall and hope I get more children; if not, I may go back to work. I can't stay in the black. It's not a question of making a profit, it's paying the milk bill. Inflation is hitting family day care hard. These children are from one-parent families and need to be fed by me or they'll be malnourished; they get only soup for dinner at home.*

Changing socio-economic patterns threaten this family day care home in a very physical sense as well. Apartment buildings loom ominously on either side of the Cary's, as if waiting for word to gobble up the house and yard. One of the last holdouts in an R-4 zone, the property will sooner or later yield to high-density pressure. The loss to children, it seemed to us, is typical of rear-view-mirror urban planning.

Mrs. Yoshida: Nourishing the Moral Roots

In spite of her best efforts Mrs. Cary is suddenly faced with problems of survival, mostly because of the erosion, beyond her control, of essential supports. Mrs. Yoshida, who lives ten miles or so due south, has not experienced many of these problems. This is so probably because of two inter-related factors; she has a steady source of referrals, and the population she serves is less transient and possibly economically more stable.

Mrs. Yoshida, a slight, gentle Japanese-American woman deeply involved in Christian church activities, greeted us shyly, apologizing for her bare feet. Warm and informal, she likes to be called by her first name. The original time of our interview had to be changed due to conflict with a Bible class she was holding that morning in her home; in the summer she has Bible study lessons for the children. The Yoshida's home, though small and unprepossessing, is comfortable and immaculate, with a book-filled den and a back yard full of flowers and vegetables [9]. Located in a low-density residential area, it is nevertheless close to industry and commercial establishments, as well as a university, hospital and airport. The junior high school grounds not far away provide an ideal spot for the school-agers to play ball and roller skate; a friend drives the group there.

Most of Mrs. Yoshida's referrals come from the church school or former parents; she does no advertising. She has had all four of her school age children for four years, including the kindergartener who came as an infant. One mother who moved to another community continues to bring her child to Mrs. Yoshida's daily because she will keep her evenings. As we talked a steady parade of people came and went -- her teen-age son confined at home after open-heart surgery; a neighbor who came to wish him well; a friend for whom she does sewing; the mother of Jimmy, one of the family day care children. Jimmy's mother, a waitress on the early shift, had come to pick him up. Sitting down to chat as though she were one of the family, she told us she didn't know what she would do without Mrs. Yoshida, that she wouldn't be able to work.

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[7] Her charge of $17.00 a week for kindergarteners includes lunch. For the 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. arrivals she charges $15.00 a week; she cares for younger children for $25.00 a week, the same fee she charges for school age children in summer.

[8] Mrs. Cary commented: *In one-parent families, there's no permanency. A quarrel with the boy friend and the mother moves; the child is taken out of care.*

[9] The yard boasted delightful bits of whimsy; old plumbing fixtures were everywhere, bathtubs full of onions and toilets sprouting pansies. Mrs. Yoshida remarked: *I had a friend who didn't need them any more and I thought, why let them go to waste?*

Jimmy goes to morning kindergarten. His mother brings him at 5:30 a.m., letting herself in with a key; she then puts him to bed and leaves, picking him up again at 2:00 p.m. Looking worn and tired and lonely she stayed to chat for about fifteen minutes; as she got up to leave she told Mrs. Yoshida she had brought her some eggs, for which she refused payment. All the time she was there Jimmy sat snugly in Mrs. Yoshida's lap, reluctant to leave. The interviewer noted:

> *I think Mrs. Yoshida really feels she is carrying out a mission in life, helping children of working mothers, who do not have the time to instill Christian virtues, to have a happy home life. She is not zealous or preachy -- just a lovely warm kind person who enjoys being home and sharing her home and family life with others. She obviously gets pleasure from having parents tell others about the good care she gives.*

Mrs. Yoshida is grateful to be able to be home with her seventeen-year old who needs her to be there while he recuperates. She began family day care three years ago because of her own teen-age sons: *I tried working for six months but it didn't work out. I asked my children to come home right after school and they said, 'Why? You're not home anyway'.* When Mrs. Yoshida was in high school she worked in a home where she took care of children and found it was easy: *Children seemed to respond to me.* She has taught Sunday School, worked with a Christian youth group and done a lot of work with Scouts. She enjoys family day care a great deal: *It's a lot of work but rewarding. I feel the way a doctor or minister feels -- I'm helping someone else, helping these children to grow up in a good environment.*

She strongly favors family day care over center care for children: *It gives them a chance to get away from school. They get enough of that. They can say 'I'm home from school at last', eat some cookies, take a nap. They really need their rest.* The only problem with school age care, Mrs. Yoshida points out, is that one must have more than one or two children to make ends meet, and she prefers having no more than two or three at a time. As a favor to church families she charges only 50¢ to 60¢ an hour, *what the school day care center charges* 10/. For others, she charges $22.50 a week, including lunch for kindergarteners. If she didn't have to charge less for older children she would take eight to twelve year olds. She agrees with many of the family day care mothers we talked to who feel that older children are more difficult to manage: *Four to six year olds respond to your love better; older ones, especially boys, get a little wild. Something happens after third grade -- they become very independent.* The children she has now, all under eight, seem to enjoy doing quiet things after school, reading and resting, playing Monopoly or checkers or "school". They can ride their bikes outdoors but not play at other houses *(it's too big a responsibility).* Although school is only one block away, Mrs. Yoshida picks the children up every day.

We felt a certain sense of *déja vu* -- that we had heard it all before -- when we asked Mrs. Yoshida about licensing. For her it was no help; the yearly checks were only a nuisance: *They're always pestering you.* Instead, she would like to see parents ask about the quality of individual FDCM's care. Licensing is harder on her husband than on herself; he is allergic to the TB skin test and must have an X-ray every year. The referral service needs to be greatly improved, she feels: *Parents should know more about the Department of Public Social Services, and the schools should have a list of licensed family day care mothers to give parents at PTA meetings.*

We were struck by the number of family day care mothers like Mrs. Yoshida who had visible religious ties. Family day care seems for them to be a natural extension of their strong beliefs in the sanctity of the home, the family, and children; it represents a down-to-earth, socially useful means of demonstrating their spiritual faith and commitment. The results appear to be two-fold: family day care thus gives the women who do it a sense of accomplishment and worthiness, and the children they care for receive a sense of values and structure which may be lacking in their own lives. For the most part, although some family day care mothers decry the contemporary moral ethic, or lack of it, they are sympathetic to the social and economic pressures which parents, particularly single working mothers, face. Significantly, a number commented on the fact that single fathers are beginning to feel these pressures as well.

10/ The school center does not meet the needs of many mothers since it closes at 5:30 p.m. Mrs. Yoshida's twelve hour day, which begins at 7:00 a.m., often does not end until 7:00 p.m. One advantage to her close ties with the church school is that she can leave the children at the center in case of emergency.

Mrs. Dunn: The Joy of Giving

We found many variations on the theme. Mrs. Dunn typified the women whose church background and longing to serve lead them to find fulfillment in the family day care mother role. She was one of only two in our sample who had no natural children herself; longing for her own child and unable to have one, she finally adopted a son, now six. She gave up a life-long desire to do foster care when she found the wait interminable. Finally, after another long wait, she got her family day care license in 1973.

Mrs. Dunn lives in the heart of the black community in south central Los Angeles, where good family day care homes, according to the district consultant, are scarce. Many parents in the area prefer centers and the educational learning experiences they feel they provide. It hurts Mrs. Dunn when parents take a child away to put him or her in a center: *They should value family day care more. There are more total services offered in a home. The child gets the love and affection of a mother and a father that he needs because so many come from one-parent families.*

The Dunn's home lacks the tidy, sometimes too immaculate neatness of middle-class homes; mildly cluttered, it has a lived-in, loved-in feeling about it 11/. The neighborhood, the interviewer notes, is an average black area in Los Angeles. Neither slum nor suburb, the street with its single family houses is not far from a busy main thoroughfare lined with small stores, many suffering from the depressed economic condition of the area. There are flowers and plants and a back yard made for playing in, with an old car and plenty of dirt for digging. Mr. Dunn is around during the day to help with the children, especially if Mrs. Dunn is ill. He joins the group for such events as the annual church picnic. Mrs. Dunn is a friendly warm woman in her thirties, somewhat overweight 12/, to whom smiles come easily; it may be for that reason that she finds crib babies easier to care for: *You don't have to chase after them.* When we spoke with her, Mrs. Dunn had three children, 6, 3, and 14 months. Noting that although they sometimes fight they get along together quite well, she told us she would like to have more older children to help with the younger ones, pointing out that they can teach the younger children *things they've learned in school* and keep an eye on them in the yard. Having younger children does curtail outside activities. However, during the summer they used the park for swimming and picnic lunches and went to the school playground two and a half blocks away to play. Nor does the mixed group prevent automobile trips to places like Magic Mountain, a Disneyland-like attraction north of Los Angeles.

Licensing has provided two valuable services for Mrs. Dunn: 1) She gets referrals from the Department of Social Services, her primary source, as well as from the laundromat bulletin board, friends in the neighborhood and church. 2) The DPSS-sponsored day care meetings were extremely helpful to her as a new, inexperienced family day care mother. From these meetings she got the idea for drawing up a list of 'Things to expect of a day care mother' which she has typed and photo-copied, and passes out to mothers when they come for the preliminary home visit which she requires. Although she has no formal training she has had a lifetime of practical experience. In spite of the fact that she had no children of her own she commented: *I've always been a mother, ever since I was nine years old. I took care of my brother's children.* Besides this "learning by doing", she took first aid and home nursing courses in school.

The day care experience at Mrs. Dunn's appeared to be very natural, casual, unpressured -- typically home-like. The list of activities included helping with simple yard and house chores, playing with the dog, doing holiday crafts, playing in the old car, in the dirt and in water, and doing gymnastics, along with the old standards like coloring, reading, riding bikes, playing ball. It looked like the kind of environment younger school age children, especially boys, would thrive in. One of Mrs. Dunn's problems (which are comparatively few) with parents, along with non-payment and tardiness, has been their not wanting children to get dirty. She tries to explain, with varying degrees of success, that this is good for children.

The biggest satisfaction Mrs. Dunn has derived from doing family day care has been the feeling that she has helped a child. At the same time it seems to meet her long-felt need for mothering, particularly when she gets positive feed-back from the children: *My rewards are smiles and hugs, or when they say 'I like going to Mrs. Dunn's house'; that makes me feel good.* Now she is finding an added benefit -- companionship for her own child. This additional factor appears to have caused her to shift her preference from younger children to school age.

11/ We would guess that licensing, with its heavy emphasis on strict physical standards, forces many family day care mothers to sacrifice creative disarray for precise housekeeping.

12/ This seems to be an occupational hazard in family day care -- activity is restricted by having to stay home all day, the kitchen is always available, and they can't work off weight doing heavy housework because they're too busy watching the children.

Mrs. Hunt -- Older Children Need Care, Too

A number of the family day care mothers we talked to saw their role in interaction with school age children as a specialized one. Differentiating their activities from those involved in caring for younger children, they described them as supervisorial rather than "child care", in the commonly employed sense of the term. Mrs. Hunt tended to perceive her role in this way. We feel obliged to include a discussion of this style, if only briefly, since it seems pertinent to the question of how to deal with the older child, pushing -- sometimes aggressively -- to extend his boundaries.

Mrs. Hunt has two family day care children, 14 and 10. Her own children, four boys and girls, range between the ages of 13 and 25. Always involved with children in a variety of roles including den mother and Little League parent, Mrs. Hunt feels that the most important thing for people to know about family day care, beyond the fact that it exists, is that older children up into their teens need supervision. Our interviewer notes:

> *Mrs. Hunt believes very firmly that older children need guidance and care in a context different from younger ones, but they need care no less. Her attitude is to provide them the maximum amount of freedom in the neighborhood, but with reasonable limits and acting as a resource for guidance for the children.*

The Hunt's middle-income neighborhood, located in a beach community, is secure and homogeneous, thus making possible the very open setting this family day care home represents. Unlike many of the caregivers we encountered, who saw real and potential dangers in letting children play in the neighborhood or go to parks alone, Mrs. Hunt permits both, as well as permitting other children to come to the Hunt's house. The park and school, both located across the street, have supervised activities, and each gets a great deal of use from the children; the ten-year-old boy likes to play soccer on the school playground. Another factor supporting free use of the surrounding environment is the fact that the children, brother and sister, also live across the street and know the territory. All they require from Mrs. Hunt is someone with whom to check in for 15 minutes before school and in the ten-year-old's case, for three hours after school. For this service, which includes afternoon snack, keeping the children if they are ill, trips to the beach several miles away or the movies in the summer, Mrs. Hunt charges $25.00 per week for the two children.

For the 14 year old, this arrangement provides an effective way of helping her to learn to be independent and to be responsible for her own movement and yet have a home base with help available in case of emergencies. She can do homework, practice the piano, have a snack, visit a friend, do whatever she wishes from the time school is out at 3:00 p.m. until her mother returns home at 4:45. By summer, the 14 year old had graduated to being on her own; the boy remained in Mrs. Hunt's care, coming to her house after summer school at 12:45 for lunch, then participating in activities in the park recreation program or going swimming in the afternoon.

Mrs. Reilly: Is Child Care a Cottage Industry?

Another family day care mother, Mrs. Reilly, is very vocal about the importance of the "supervisor-not-sitter" role for family day care mothers who have school-agers and about the damage archaic community attitudes do to providing good family day care. Her house, a bit cramped for space but comfortably set up for children, is nestled on a quiet side street in the shadow of two freeways, several blocks from the school and three or four from the park. She herself is in her mid-forties, a casual, common-sense woman who has taken care of other people's children since she was twelve and has been a licensed family day care mother for eight years. Her home is her life, she told us; she had tried to go to work at one time, couldn't find a reliable day care arrangement for her own child, and decided to stay home and do family day care herself. Her own son, a remarkably mature 12-year-old, joined us in the interview, adding his own comments about the children and their needs. Confined to a wheelchair by a temporary orthopedic problem, he helped supervise and play with the two boys, six and seven years old for whom Mrs. Reilly was caring 13/. One, the son of a policeman who worked the night shift, had been with her for four years. He lived just down the street and was allowed by Mrs. Reilly to play in the neighborhood as long as she had the parent's permission.

13/ While we were there he played cards with the seven year old and then went for a 'walk' with the dog and the two boys -- in his wheelchair. His presence was a very positive factor in the school age care picture. He was obviously a tremendous help and clearly loves the boys like his own brothers. He volunteered the information that the six and seven year olds pose a problem where equipment is concerned: *The hardest thing is outside games. They are too small for baseball and basketball, but too big for the climbers.*

Mrs. Reilly has a very clear role image. She dislikes the Department of Social Services' practice of calling family day care mothers 'foster parents'. She makes it clear to parents of school age children that she is not a baby-sitter nor a substitute mother but a sort of guidance counselor who encourages the taking of responsibility by the children. She is very firm with them about rules: *Parents let kids fool around with ash trays and things at home but not here, they don't! Sometimes older children have the attitude 'I don't have to listen to you,' but I make them understand I'm here to supervise.* Attentive to children's needs, she never takes two new children on one day, so that she can help individual children become acclimated. Her enjoyment in doing family day care comes from getting involved with the children: *Each child needs his own (physical and psychological) 'menu'.* She regards her role as something of a sacred responsibility and is shocked by people who fail to regard children as the country's most precious resource: *My worker said to me: 'How could you stand taking care of kids so long?' Imagine!*

The requirement that family day care mothers be licensed to take children in only one of two age brackets, 0 - 6 or 3 - 17, has caused Mrs. Reilly many problems, along with many other caregivers. Until 1970 she could and did take school age children under regulations then in effect. With the new licensing provision she was required to change to 0 - 6 since she had young children at the time. Because she was then asked to take a six year old she was forced to change back to the category 3 - 17 14/. Emphasizing the frustrations resulting from such an unrealistic requirement, she pointed out that child care demands are apt to shift from day to day; sometimes the need is for infant and preschool care, sometimes school age, and parents cannot wait for time-consuming license changes.

Mrs. Reilly commented on the city's recent attempt to get rid of family day care by demanding that it be removed from R_1 and R_2 zones:

> *One city councilman compared us to hairdressers! He said we were bringing bad elements into the city, causing congestion. And they wonder why they have things like the recent case where a boy who was left alone with other kids shot himself. They are encouraging people to let children run the streets and get into trouble.*
>
> *They try to call us a business. We don't make any money. I average 45¢ an hour, after I buy food and equipment. I buy the children clothes, shoes -- I won't let them go out to have lunch with us in rags.*

Her comments about licensing were no less scathing:

> *They're destroying good homes with their red tape. Last year we had 60 family day care homes in this community, now we have only 15. It's good to have a check-up of homes but they put you through such a hassle. I'm checked out four times a year -- this is over-doing it. Doctors are licensed only once; why shouldn't we be? On the other hand I know a woman who has ten children and no fence; the Department won't do anything about it.*
>
> *The cutback in consultants is very bad. They should be able to phone you and you them. The turn-over in licensing workers is terrific. They keep switching signals; each new worker has some new theory. One says one thing, another says another.*
>
> *Licensing is important -- we need screening, but it's annoying to go through so much year after year. We just lost a good family day care mother on this street because of it. The city charges $55.00 for a business license plus $15.00 a year. Now the state wants money. There is just too much red tape. They make you feel like a criminal. We ought to be treated as professional people.*

The Special License: A Way of Enlarging the Group

For more experienced family day care mothers a natural outgrowth of the "not-just-a-sitter" concept, which may merge with the Social Caretaker role, seems to be the movement toward seeking a special license for care of up to ten children, with the help of an assistant. Catch 22 is the

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14/ We found much confusion and misunderstanding among family day care mothers about licensing regulations, due in part, it appeared, to uneven application by licensing workers. There seemed to be many discrepancies in the interpretation of regulations by individual workers. Some family day care mothers said they were allowed to keep a child already in care past age six, in spite of 0 - 6 license; others said they had had to give up children who had turned six.

problem many run into when they apply for the license and discover city zoning laws prevent its issuance. If they can hurdle that obstacle, they still have the gauntlet of city health, fire, building and safety departments to run. The final indignity may be the abuse of neighbors who find the idea of day care next door only slightly more appealing than a MacDonald's Take-Out, and possibly less so. While there may be some genuine concerns about expanding the family day care concept to include larger numbers of children, under the guidance of a competent family day care mother in an adequate setting such facilities can and do provide developmental child care in a warm, secure, home-like environment. The special license appears to be a particularly valuable means of meeting the need in areas where demand is heavy and good homes are few. Some of the women we interviewed had special licenses; some had tried to get them and given up. Others simply fudged on the numbers quota, with varying results.

Mrs. Neff: Making it Work

Mrs. Neff promised herself as a child that she would never leave her child home alone to do the household chores as her own working mother had done. After marriage and motherhood Mrs. Neff went back to work, putting her daughter in family day care; when her child went to school she quit work to be home with her. Bored after *cleaning the same drawers for the second and third time* Mrs. Neff began doing family day care herself, nineteen years ago. When her husband died she switched to a special license for ten to give herself something more challenging to do and her daughter, now grown but still living with her, a job. She is quick to add: *I don't have to depend on family day care for a living; I have other income* 15/. Money, she points out, isn't the real reason she does family day care:

> *I love the challenge of getting a child who has been bounced around, that centers won't keep -- the children they label as behavior problems. Large centers don't have time or patience. It's the challenge of trying to help them -- the child and mother.*

We observed Mrs. Neff soothe a sobbing second grader whose mother had just gotten a traffic ticket and told him she didn't have the money to pay for it. (*It's unfair for parents to burden young children with their problems,* she told us after he left, consoled, for the kitchen and a snack.) She strongly dislikes centers for their cold institutionalized atmosphere: *Family day care gives children a feeling of belonging, of security. Too much school is bad; they need to have a place where they feel they belong.*

Fortunately for Mrs. Neff -- and parents -- she lives in a section of the city zoned for high density, multiple dwellings. Apartment buildings loom all around Mrs. Neff's one-story home, which she affectionately refers to as the House That Jack Built, with its various additions over the years -- a new kitchen to conform to code, a playroom for the children converted from the original living room, a remodeled patio for her own living quarters. The house and yard are surrounded by a chain-link fence to keep the children from wandering out into the dangerous street, where an endless line of parked cars is punctuated by a series of blind driveways.

Mrs. Neff has "read a lot", taken child development classes, gone to numerous meetings (*I guess I'm on everybody's mailing list!*) but claims no formal training (*I've just learned by living and doing*). Thoroughly organized, she has a mimeographed schedule of activities which she has handed out to the parents of the ten children she cares for, four of whom are six and seven years old.

Her focus is on the program for younger children, a relaxed version of many of the standard nursery school activities with the added comforts of home. She does not get many calls for school age care. Since the physical space is set up primarily for preschoolers, children older than seven might be hard put to entertain themselves unless they enjoyed playing with the little ones, which the school-agers at Mrs. Neff's apparently do (*The older ones get along fine with the younger ones -- too well in fact. I have to tell them to play by themselves sometimes. They tend to get bossy; this doesn't give the younger ones a chance to grow*). The older children like to play teacher before they go to school at 9:00 a.m., or watch "Gumby" on TV, construct with Legos, color, do puzzles. When they come home from school at 2:30 p.m. they rest, eat, do homework, read, listen

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15/ Licensing regulations require a detailed and, according to some family day care mothers, intrusive financial statement of family income in an attempt to cull out persons who would have to or want to make family day care their sole source of support. Mrs. Neff feels this should be changed: *They should look into the background of the woman and if she is qualified relax the minimum income requirements.*

to records; in good weather, which predominates year-round, they go outdoors to play tetherball, hopscotch, or play on the jungle gym. On very hot smoggy summer days they stay indoors in the air-conditioned playrooms. Older children follow the same general schedule as that of the preschoolers, which lists 3:30 as juice and snack time, 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. play time and 5:30 - 6:00 TV time.

Because she has more children, Mrs. Neff is able to charge parents less for school age than the average family day care fee and considerably less than private center care, which parents tell her has become too expensive. While she has a sliding scale, her fees are generally $10.00 a week for school age, $20.00 for one preschooler and $35.00 for two children from one family. With added responsibilities at home, however, she does not take the children out on trips, noting that *car insurance is prohibitive*, there are no nearby parks, and fathers, who usually get custody of the children on week ends, take them to places like Disneyland. Because of the dangers, neighborhood play is prohibited. Like many of the school children in family day care, however, particularly those in the 5 to 7 age range, those at Mrs. Neff's seem to enjoy coming "home" to rest, eat and relax and benefit from the absence of continuous stimulation.

The kind of child care arrangement Mrs. Neff has developed over many years of trial and error learning works in the self-interest of all participants. Parents have a comparatively inexpensive, safe, secure environment for their children, Mrs. Neff derives satisfaction from the challenge of meeting children's needs as well as receiving a supplement to her income, and her daughter has gainful employment. By this time she has worked out most of the kinks 16/. However, she is always faced with the problem of developing rapport with new licensing workers; the turnover is high and most, according to Mrs. Neff, are young girls who are not knowledgeable and have the wrong attitude: *They don't seem too interested in the children or in the family day care mother. They've never asked if I had problems . . .* 17/. She differentiates between the licensing workers, whom most family day care mothers see as policemen, and the consultants. She says of the latter: *I really like Mrs. B. -- she's the most honestly sincere down-to-earth person I know.* Her real concern right now is the public's failure to recognize the value as well as the presence of family day care homes: *I went to a big child care meeting recently and it gave me a creepy feeling to see the emphasis on centers. I'd like to get across the idea that all-day institutional care is terrible for young children. There's no love, no personal attention -- it's really very sad. . .*

Mrs. Klein: Cut Off at the Pass

Mrs. Klein resembles a softened version of the farm wife in Grant Wood's "American Gothic", long calico dress and all. A grandmother who lives in the Valley with her husband, alone now that her three children are grown, she enjoys helping families (of whom there are more and more, she points out) who need it. She and her husband applied for a special license; they were not as lucky as Mrs. Neff. In spite of the fact that they have more than enough square footage for ten childen they have not been granted the license. Their residential neighborhood is zoned R_1; the area is low density, although in transition. The fact that it has been building up quickly in the last few years is apparently a major cause of the problems the Klein's have experienced.

Mrs. Klein has been licensed for ten years and doing child care for many more: *Fifteen years after I started a neighbor turned me in. The people next door had sold to an elderly couple who said they didn't like the 'noise'.* When she decided a few years back that she would like to have more day care children she and her husband, a precision tool and die maker, constructed a new building on their lot, a modern playroom with carpeting, bathrooms for the children, a vast assortment of toys. They then applied for a special license for ten children, only to discover that a conditional use application would be required, necessitating payment of a $500.00 fee and the presentation of a petition indicating the approval of all neighbors within 300 feet.

As soon as the neighbors got wind of the Klein's plans, their problems began (*One woman thought it would hinder her from selling her house*). The city building department, under pressure from surrounding home owners, began infinite and apparently infinitesimal checks on the property. In the Klein's opinion, the department did its best to find fault with the property and prove an

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16/ Getting the equipment -- from second hand stores and donations -- has been no real problem, but maintenance of it, especially getting bicycles repaired, has.

17/ Mrs. Neff makes it clear that she is very much in favor of licensing, noting that in spite of red tape, it is needed to safeguard children: *This neighborhood is full of unlicensed family day care mothers. There are a lot of dangerous driveways around here and they (the caregivers) let the children play unsupervised. . .*

illegal operation: *They mentioned problems with the roof and things that were ridiculous and really had no connection with the care of the children.* By the time the Klein's had gone through all the inspections of the city fire, health, building and safety departments, lengthy time-consuming operations steeped in paperwork, they had given up in disgust. The health department continues to hassle them, Mrs. Klein points out, in spite of the fact that they dropped the application for the special license and continue to care for only six children.

The loss to children and parents seems the more severe because of the outstanding features of the outdoor play area. The Klein's house is located at the front of over half-an-acre of beautifully wooded property. Once an orchard, it boasts at least a dozen climbable trees, some of which hide inviting tree houses among their branches. Mr. Klein's working hobby led him to construct a wonderland of imaginative play equipment. In awe, we took the following inventory and may have missed something at that:

4 slides
1 barrel climber made out of tires
2 tree houses
6 swing sets
4 merry-go-rounds
2 tree swings
1 tire climber
1 wooden tricycle go-round 16/
2 metal climbers
2 spring horses (made of old water heaters)

In addition there were six pieces of complex equipment, two gardens, lots of dirt for digging, an abundance of shade, and horses (real) on the other side of the fence. The indoor playroom, quiet, neat and orderly, full of 'standard' toys, was a complement to the spacious, informal, natural outdoors where it was all right to be noisy, dirty, spontaneous, creative in an unfocused way.

The tragedy is compounded by the great need for care in the area. Mrs. Klein gets many calls for school age care, mostly through word of mouth, which she must turn down (*I get a lot of calls from the DPSS for infants. I can't understand why they keep referring these to me when they know I have a 3 - 17 license*). Because the neighborhood is in transition from a quiet rural area to one of greater density, with people constantly moving in and out on their way up, sometimes down, the socio-economic ladder, Mrs. Klein sees many families in need of help, the parents rootless and the children without a sense of belonging.

The biggest satisfaction she gets out of doing family day care at this point in her life, which includes active participation in church youth programs, is *meeting people and working with them.* Not only do parents seek her help about personal problems (*mostly divorce situations*) and the children's school problems, but the school itself calls and asks her help: *One time the school called to find out about the mother of a seven year old in my care. She never showed up either here or at school; the little girl just came by herself. The school put a case worker on the problem but they still haven't found the mother.*

Mrs. Klein is concerned. A volunteer nights in a church-sponsored coffee house for addicts, she knows first hand about the drug activity in the elementary school across the street. Her own family day care children talk about being bullied by older children, about increasing racial tensions at school: *It's a tremendous problem.* She does what she can to help, but private fears and public short-sightedness have diminished the chances of any substantial solutions.

16/ One of Mr. Klein's ingenious creations, it had the rear sections of three or four tricycles attached to a central turn-table, merry-go-round fashion.

CHAPTER XI

WHO DOESN'T THRIVE

The family day care mothers we have described thus far appear to be thrivers, for the most part. Not all of the women with whom we spoke have fared as well, although none, in our estimation, was even remotely guilty of the attitudes and behavior some of the horror stories about family day care have described. Some simply appeared to have developed more workable and satisfying styles of caregiving than others. Those who had been visibly more successful in doing so seemed to have more actively chosen their role; others, whose comments revealed more problems (although they typically avoided labeling them as such), seemed to have been cast unwilling in roles in which they felt a certain lack of power. Often licensing regulations or spatial limitations -- or both -- seemed to contribute to this sense of powerlessness.

One of the greatest influences on degree of satisfaction and, undoubtedly, quality of care appeared to be the resources to which the family day care mother had access and how she used them. We have the feeling that the less opportunity the caregiver herself had for leading a fulfilling life, the less chance the children in her care had for doing so. Money as a primary motive for doing family day care, lack of space, no transportation, paucity of personal interests -- all contributed to a circumscribed existence for the family day care mother and a constricted environment for the children. Where the family day care mother's horizons had been expanded, either through her own initiative or outside agencies such as the Department of Social Services, through day care meetings, personal contact with consultants, etc., things seemed to go more smoothly and joyfully for all. Isolation of the family day care mother either physically or psychologically seems to militate against the best kind of care, perhaps more so for older than for younger children. Combined with lack of people, space or equipment within the setting, it can mean low satisfaction levels for everyone involved -- children, parents, and family day care mothers.

Mrs. Lanz -- Love is Not Enough

Mrs. Lanz, who became licensed only a year and a half ago on the advice of a friend at church because she felt there had to be an easier way of making a living than working "out", seems to have no particular role. Judging from her comments, we would guess that she sees herself quite simply as a "baby-sitter", in contrast to those who avoid the term. The care she provides is probably more custodial than developmental, although she told us that she tries to interest the children in learning to play together and to teach the younger children to carry on conversations, to share toys. Grey-haired and close to sixty, Mrs. Lanz was pleasant and anxious to help with the study, although not particularly verbal 1/. (In response to our question about what she wanted parents to understand, she replied: *I don't volunteer anything; the less you say the better off you are. It just doesn't pay to talk too much*).

She, her house and the children -- a mixture of infants, preschoolers and school-agers -- were tidy, perhaps too much so; the atmosphere was a bit bleak. The house itself was small, with four tiny bedrooms, one of which was devoted to cribs and toys for the infants and toddlers. In another bedroom, just waking from his nap in his crib, was a two year old who cannot walk. Born with a deformed leg, he was waiting an operation, Mrs. Lanz informed us.

Outdoors as well as indoors, space is a problem. The yard in back, the width of the house and only 15 to 20 feet deep, was set up for preschoolers with a canopied sandbox filled with small plastic toys but no sand (*It was filled last fall but they threw all the sand out*), an old metal swing set and a couple of small tricycles. Several small fruit trees looked inviting but were clearly off-limits (*They get their balls caught in them -- that upsets me so*). When the school age boys -- a kindergartener and two first graders -- want to play ball they must do it in the equally cramped front yard of the small corner lot, most of which is taken up by the Lanz' camper; or the narrow side yard which borders the street. Neighboring yards are strictly off-limits.

1/ We would not suggest that to be highly articulate necessarily correlates with giving good care, although this may often be true with older children. Many family day care mothers were understandably shy in our presence; an interviewer notes: *I sometimes felt that a family day care mother who seemed reluctant to share ideas was perhaps having a hard time switching to adult talk and adult ideas. Sort of as if during the day they operated at a different level and in a different gear and I interrupted the chain of very routine and set events. Perhaps the responses might have been more extensive if I had visited in the evening during an adult time.* In general, it seemed -- logically enough -- that those who expressed preference for school-agers were more verbal than those who preferred, and more frequently took, infants and preschoolers.

We talked with Mrs. Lanz as she sat on the living room couch feeding a four-month-old baby her bottle. Anxious to be ready for the mother (Mrs. Lanz prides herself on having the children cleaned up and ready for parents when they come), she cuddled the baby fondly in her arms as she *told us how she had worked all her life as a domestic*, doing unskilled work in restaurants, washing dishes: *I've never had any training and always had to take low paying jobs. That heavy work is hard on you -- it was always so cold and I was always getting sick -- it got on my nerves so, I had to quit.* Tired of the constant struggle, Mrs. Lanz decided to look for some way of working at home. When someone at church told her about family day care, she felt she had found the answer to her dilemma. Although she has never had any preparation for child care other than raising two children of her own, now grown, she assured us: *All you need is confidence!* At that moment, she did indeed seem confident and very much at ease. The supreme confidence she displayed with the baby, however, was less evident when the kindergartener began to cry after repeating several times something which neither one of us, to our chagrin, could make out. Mrs. Lanz admits she finds the younger children more enjoyable to take care of, especially the two and three year olds: *I like them when they're little and cuddly -- they're so cute -- they try to kiss you and hug you. They let you know they love you -- that makes you feel good.* The older ones, on the other hand "get into trouble": *One threw a rock yesterday and almost broke a window in a neighbor's car.* When the older boys begin fighting which apparently happens fairly frequently, Mrs. Lanz disciplines them by sending them off to bed to think about it for awhile.

Even if Mrs. Lanz were more receptive to the idea of caring for energetic school age boys, the environment would not be conducive to it. Indoors, the space is cramped, the opportunity to play severely limited. We saw no games for older children; for the most part they use the younger children's toys, including puzzles and animal tiles. Occasionally they bring their own checkers and card games. Outdoors, things didn't look too much better; the play area is so limited, it is no wonder that the neighbors' windows are in constant danger of being broken. Because of the potential trouble they might cause, visits by neighborhood children are discouraged: *The bigger kids come over here, but I don't like them to.* The children at Mrs. Lanz' are not supposed to leave the property either: *The other day one of the boys scared me to death by going away from the yard. I sent him to bed -- it's too big a responsibility to have them out of my sight.* There are no parks in the area in which the children might play -- but Mrs. Lanz feels she could not run the risks involved in letting them go even if there were.

We could not blame Mrs. Lanz for her reticence. The community, newly created to absorb a ground swell of transient families, has little sense of community. Cultivated by profit-hungry land developers the instant neighborhood, sprung up almost overnight, lacks roots. The Xeroxed houses, still fairly new, will be ticky-tack boxes in a few years; some already have begun to lose their middle-class veneer. There are no recreational resources in the area, at least not to Mrs. Lanz' knowledge; if there were, the children couldn't use them because Mrs. Lanz doesn't drive: *I stick pretty close to home* 2/. One of the boys is occasionally picked up by his mother, a teacher at a nearby school, so he can participate in after-school activities.

Outside of contacts at church, Mrs. Lanz' adult relationships appear limited. She seldom talks with parents (*They're usually too tired*); they don't ask for advice, and she offers none. Contact with school is equally non-existent. Mrs. Lanz went to the DPSS meetings, which she found helpful, but noted, in a mildly perplexed way, that *They haven't had any meetings in quite a while.* We couldn't help feeling that here was a situation where licensing was missing the boat. Mrs. Lanz, basically a warm, motherly sort of person who enjoys caring for children and probably does a good job with very young children, was trying to do the right things, but seemed to be searching for some input and support which she wasn't getting. We suspected, for one thing, that she took more children than the five for which she is licensed. Although most were part-timers and were not all there at once, the number was probably more than she could manage, given the limited amount of space. She seemed to be having trouble both in getting satisfactory referrals and keeping children; none of the children had been there longer than six months. She told us that many people, referred by the DPSS, call but *they don't come; they ask how much I charge* (Eighty-five cents an hour with no transportation, or 75¢ plus 50¢ a trip for school pick-ups) *and where I'm located, but they never show up.* Her common sense told her that some of the parents needed help with child-rearing practices; somewhat uncertain of her own ground, she sought our advice: *I have one puzzle -- one mother feeds her baby regular food -- she brought me a can of Nalley's beef stew, whole kernel corn and baked beans to give her. Is that right?* She went on to remark that she felt some parents don't seem to know how to take care of their children.

2/ Mr. Lanz, who is retired, picks up two of the children at school. The other walks to one of the schools within walking distance.

It seemed to us that Mrs. Lanz had gotten in over her head by taking older children. Fortunately, she realized it; she told us that she had taken school-agers just this year and wasn't planning to continue because it caused too many problems for her: *They draw other children from the neighborhood here (and) that's not so good.* The mixed-age range seemed to be giving her difficulties; she frequently had to resort to her standard discipline procedure of making the older children lie down if they said bad words to the younger ones or slapped them.(Usually, she noted, the older simply ignored the younger, since they wanted to be outside playing by themselves). Both Mr. and Mrs. Lanz obviously enjoy the younger children more; Mr. Lanz, who helps "a lot" with the children, loves to play with the little ones, but the older children are too big to sit on his lap and he's gotten too old himself to engage in the energetic physical activities the boys like.

When we called Mrs. Lanz back five months later to inquire about summer care, we found her phone had been disconnected; we guessed that she was taking time off for a vacation in their camper with her husband. Because she had no particular role as a caregiver, she probably felt no real commitment to it either. In addition, she was undoubtedly weary from a year of trying to cope with a flock of unruly five and six year old boys and unbargained-for neighborhood children in addition to her infants and preschoolers, in small quarters. We recalled the frustration her child care consultant had expressed to us over the most recent DPSS regulation -- touted as an efficiency measure -- which left family day care mothers with no personal contact or access to the counseling services they had once had. At the same time we remembered Mrs. Lanz' disappointment at the unexplained disappearance of the day care meetings and consultant's calls.

Hopefully, these case histories have given the reader a sense of the context which surrounds the bare bone responses to the interviewer's questions reported in the early chapter. Women who provide family day care come in a variety of types. Their aspirations and behavior seem to be highly associated with the role which they define for themselves. The ability to define a workable role -- one which meets the needs of children and their parents and provides personal satisfaction to the caregiver appears critical in determining both the quality and stability of family day care.

Some of the role satisfactions available to women who find pleasure in caring for school age children are (1) the opportunity to continue a child-rearing role (and to make use of a house already equipped), but with the added free time during the school term, (2) the chance to engage in activities such as trips to parks, museums, swimming, crafts etc., (3) the feeling of contribution to building character and providing a sense of values.

Women who wish to remain housewives, who are somewhat task and activity oriented, who particularly enjoyed the school age years of their own children seem to be good candidates for the role of caregiver to school age children.

CHAPTER XII

A SUMMING UP

We began this study with five questions about family day care for children of school age. In this final chapter we will review the findings which seem most relevant to the questions which were posed.

1. In family day care how widespread is the care of school age children?

We found that among licensed caregivers who currently had children in care four out of every ten were caring for at least one child of school age. Of the 73 caregivers in our sample who were caring for school age children, 60% also had preschool children in care; the remaining 40% cared for school age only.

Seventy-one percent of the school age children in care were in the five to eight age range. Twenty-nine percent were older than eight years. This figure compares with the 25% enrollment we found in group care for children over age eight.

2. What are the circumstances which are associated with the occurrence of family day care for school age children?

Factors in the relationship of the caregiver to the family explain the occurrence of much school age care. Thus, one predictor in family day care, as in group care, is that it was the type of care used when the child was of preschool age. Many caregivers find themselves caring for school age children because they have continued to keep children in care as they grow older. We also found that it is common for a family day care giver to care for preschool and school age children from the same family. These providers might not have accepted a single school age child, but were willing to do so when the arrangement also included full day care of younger siblings 1/.

The preferences of the caregivers also explain the presence of school age children in care. Women whose own children are adolescents or young adults are more apt to care for these children than women whose own children are younger. Women whose own family is older often discover that they like children of school age. Their home has served as a living space for children of school age and is often particularly suitable for older boys and girls with play equipment, games, etc., still available. Some women at this stage of their life enjoy the schedule which gives them free time during the school year and sets aside summer and holidays as a time to do "special things" with children.

Most of the caregivers in our sample were long time license holders. It appears that care for school age children is also positively associated with years of caregiving.

In summary, our data indicate that care of school age children tends to be positively associated with care of younger siblings, with a stage in family life where the caregivers own children are no longer of preschool age. Both of these factors also tend to be associated with established caregiving. Apparently, newly licensed caregivers are less likely to care for school age children.

3. What are the services offered?

Many family day care givers reported that they provided an extensive array of services, including care of the child when ill, trips to the doctor or dentist, overnight care, provision of breakfast and supper etc. The provision of these extra services, common in family day care, is almost impossible to provide in a group care facility. At one extreme were caregivers who appeared quite willing to provide any services for the child which were needed by the parent. At the other extreme were providers who offered no services except after-school care. Only 58% of the women who were providing care during the school year continued their services during the summer.

1/ In our studies of group care (1965, 1967) we found that there was a predominance of only children and youngest sibs. Although we do not have data to substantiate it, our guess is that being an oldest or middle sibling is predictive of placement in family day care.

This figure surprised us, especially when compared to the continuity which we found in group care 2/. Since the community offers many summer activities, day camps, regular camps, and special programs, many parents may find that they can piece together a summer of visits with relatives, summer activities, family vacations and paid baby sitting. Furthermore, children in family care are not nearly so apt to "lose their place" as are children in centers.

Caregivers who offered primarily a custodial service did not seem likely to continue their caregiving during the long days of summer. Other caregivers appeared to schedule their lives according to a school year and planned to have the summer free from the responsibility of child care.

An important service offered by family day care that is easily overlooked is the provision of care within walking distance of the child's elementary school. This close proximity saves the time and expense of providing an elaborate transportation system which often is required in group care facilities.

4. What can be said about the experiences provided to children, especially as compared to that offered by center programs?

We found a tremendous variation in the type of care which family day care mothers are trying to offer. Many provide a friendly, homey atmosphere for children during the few hours they are not in school and do not provide care during the summer. Such care probably serves its limited purpose given the short number of hours these children are in care. Another group of caregivers provides an impressive array of services and enrichment. They take children on trips, help with homework, often serve three meals and are quite willing for the children to stay overnight on occasion. In general these caregivers (about 40% of our sample) provide many of the sorts of experiences which would ordinarily be provided in a good home if mother were not working. This type of caregiver often provides care throughout the summer.

Our data (which are limited) indicate that children spend more time sleeping, lounging around, reading, and watching television in family care as compared to group settings. This generalization holds for summer as well as the school year, since in family care, as in group care, large numbers of children attend summer school. Only 35% of the caregivers reported no children in summer school. In describing center programs the important distinction appeared to be whether the program was simple or complex. Simple programs offered only a very narrow range of options, the most common being outdoor games on the school playground. Complex activity programs offered a wide range of options and the equipment and supplies necessary for implementation. In family day care the situation is similar. Some settings provide a complex activity program, others offer primarily a place to lounge and relax. In the simple group program the child who can't stand vigorous outdoor play suffers. In the simple family care setting the child who wants and needs vigorous activity is apt to be miserable.

We find it difficult to compare homes with centers along a "program" dimension. Centers provide a service to children in groups and use activities as an organizer. Although it is common to see children loafing, visiting, or horsing around in a center program, the staff does not view this behavior as part of the "program". A home has a somewhat different rationale. In a sense the "program" revolves around activities which meet the needs of daily living: cooking, cleaning, errands, etc. The time left over is "free" often in a much broader sense than is true in centers.

We are suggesting that the ecology of a home is not the same as that of a center. Consequently, to say that centers offer more craft activities and homes more TV watching probably is not a particularly useful distinction.

5. What are the circumstances which limit the availability of care for children of school age?

The licensing regulations in California are designed in ways which definitely discourage care of school age children. In family day care one of the most annoying and restrictive regulations is that a caregiver may hold a license for children from birth to age 6 or a license for children age 3 to 17. Family day caregivers are continually finding that the age of children in care does not coincide with the current status of their license.

The other regulation which seems unduly restrictive relates to the number of children permitted. Any of the family day care mother's own children under age 14 must be counted as part of

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2/ Forty-six percent of the centers had at least 90% of their winter enrollment, 37% had 75 - 90%, while only 17% reported fewer than 75% of their children continuing (Prescott and Milich, 1974).

the maximum of six children which she is permitted. Caregivers report that their older children coming home from school are often a big help with younger children and serve to improve the caregiving rather than complicate it. Also there is the feeling of many caregivers that they can easily manage more school age children than regulations permit. There is a certain type of caregiver who likes school age children, works particularly well with them and could easily increase the size of her group, to perhaps ten. Although this type of license is permitted in family day care, an increasing number of applicants are running into zoning problems when they apply for the special license.

There is also the problem of women who are willing to supervise children after school in informal ways, but who do not see themselves in the "official" role of licensed caregiver. They remain invisible, and mothers who need care often have great trouble in making neighborhood connections with women who could meet their needs.

Clearly, regulations for family day care were not designed with care for school age children as an important consideration. Theoretically, a license is granted before children can be cared for. This being the case, a home is usually evaluated with full day care of preschool children as the standard. As in licensing of group care, the fact that children of school age turn up in licensed facilities is a "nuisance" which messes up otherwise tidy regulations.

Some Issues in Providing Family Day Care for School Age Children

In the preceding section we have summarized our findings about the extent of family day care being offered to school age children, the forms that it takes and the practices and variations which can be found. Clearly, family day care is am importance source of care for school age children providing a variety of options to fit differing family needs. Our data certainly established that this service does exist. Among the questions posed we did not ask whether family day care was good care for school age children. In this concluding section we give some thought to the question of quality and issues of community support and awareness which we see as closely related to any serious discussion of the well-being of school age children.

Good Care for the School Age Child: Some Essential Ingredients

Good day care for children of school age needs three kinds of resources: (1) Adults who can help children learn skills, understand how social systems work, and develop satisfying arenas of initiative where industry and competence are required to bring plans to fruition. (2) Spaces and places where things can happen. Older children need more square feet of space, not less, than younger children. A good school age program needs places for the development of a wide variety of physical skills, places where projects can be carried out over a long period of time, quiet places free from intrusion, and places which are adequately equipped with tools and supplies to teach skills and craftsmanship. (3) Access to the community. It seems doubtful that the first two criteria could be met without some access to the community, because few programs can offer, within their narrow confines, the variety of resources which a group of children with different talents, interests and developmental levels needs to get a sense of themselves as capable of work, planning and commitment. This statement also implies that school age children need a community which is safe and permits them to circulate through it.

In both group and family day care we found settings which do not offer this wide range of experience. Service in these settings is directed much more narrowly to care and protection and offers a very limited range of available activities. In both types of care we felt that these arrangements were sometimes quite adequate depending on the circumstances. For example, two or three hours in a family day care setting which offers an adult, a quiet setting with rugs and couches to lounge on, an after-school snack and very little else may be quite suitable for the child who finds a school environment unnerving. Some children experience the large numbers of children, the hard chairs and asphalt playground of school as forbidding and unresponsive, just as other children enjoy the game atmosphere, finding basketball or tether ball with peers a good way to let off steam. It seems important to provide a diversity of environments for children -- and even those family day care settings which were very limited appeared to us to provide useful options for some children.

When a full range of opportunities was offered, the provider had fairly predictable characteristics. Primarily, these were women who had found a role which met their needs as well as those of the children. By the end of the study we were impressed with the importance of a "good fit" for adults as well as for children.

It would seem that caregivers who derive satisfaction from the role tend to invest greater energy in it and to expand the possibilities for involvement of the children. Family day care settings where a wide range of activities are offered appear to provide good care for a wide variety of children. Women who offer this type of care seem skillful in finding activities which are needed by individual children. They also make good use of the larger community in meeting children's needs. Family day care settings which mainly provide a place to read, watch TV or lounge around may not be productive for children with great desire either to socialize or to engage in large muscle activities or for children who require a more complex arena in which to develop skills. Conversely a passive, withdrawn child might be too comfortable in such a setting with little encouragement to socialize or try more active roles.

In like manner caring for school age children may not be a good choice for providers who particularly enjoy responding to the dependency needs of very young children. Some adults never come to enjoy the independence, the "bratty" challenging of authority that is part of the behavior of school age children. Some adults may have an ideal home for infants, but this same home may not provide the space or furnishings which can withstand the onslaught of children loosening up after a day in school.

Hopefully the case histories have given the reader some feel for the importance of a good fit between personal needs and the ability of the environment to meet them -- not only for children, but also for caregivers.

In Conclusion

Family day care does provide a considerable amount of care for the school age child. Some advantages of this type of care are that it is usually located in the child's neighborhood in close proximity to the elementary school, much of the care is individualized, and often opportunities for a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities are offered. Many homes provide more services to parents than a center typically can offer.

Despite the value of family day care as a source of care for older children, the community has done very little to encourage or support it. Licensing regulations as they now stand tend to discourage such care by placing unnecessarily rigid restrictions on ages and numbers of children who can be in care.

Economics also enters the picture. Most women can maintain both a higher and more regular income by caring for preschoolers rather than school age children. Some caregivers who would like to specialize in caring for school age children find that they cannot make the necessary connections to keep a full house, thus meeting their expectations for income.

Both of these problems point to the community's lack of concern for the out-of-school life of older children. Licensing regulations are not designed with any concern for this age group. The community does not provide effective ways for parents to locate caregivers who might meet their needs. Parents do make arrangements in the neighborhood, often with mothers of their child's classmates. These women are seldom licensed and do not make their services known except through the neighborhood network.

Women who do family day care have chosen to remain in the home. The occupation of homemaker is not currently viewed with much interest or support -- except as a target for rejection. Currently, the out-of-school hours of school age children are not of much concern either, with the major emphasis for this age placed on school related tasks and problems. Little thought appears to be given to the changes in the lives of school age children which the exodus of women from the day time life of a neighborhood has produced. Much more than preschool children (who also profit from excursions into the community) those of school age need to exercise their independence and widening curiosity by exploring and getting to know a neighborhood.

As the number of women who work at home has decreased, so has the supply of volunteers who could be counted on to work with the youth-serving agencies, such as Camp Fire Girls and Boy Scouts, to chaperone children, to provide the props and support for the neighborhood circus or the lemonade stand. Perhaps this role is passé as it once was carried out but it is an important role, one that needs to be recreated with some status and pay attached.

Many women who do family day care are now filling this role. We asked our sample of family day care givers what they would like policy makers and people in the community to know about family day care. These are the concerns about family day care which they wanted us to communicate:

.. That it is there -- educate the public about its existence, place less emphasis on centers.

.. The importance of a home environment.

.. The worth of the family day care mother -- how much she does for the little money and recognition which she gets.

.. The importance of licensing -- homes should be screened and parents should seek out licensed homes.

.. The need for better referral services -- better communication through the media -- schools should have a list of family day care homes.

.. Family day care is a good occupation for women who love children, who don't want to or cannot work outside the home. It provides opportunity for self-fulfillment.

.. The welfare of children should have a higher parental and national priority.

We think that these women have provided an excellent summary of the issues which are the subject of this report.

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HOME INTERVIEW

APPENDIX A-1

Date__________________________ Observer________________ Code #:________

1. How many day care children do you presently have?
2. What are their ages?

(The following questions pertain to the school age children in care)

3. Can you tell me something about the families of the school age children you care for?
   a. Do they live near you? (within walking distance)
   b. How long have the children been with you?
      ___ 0 to 6 months ______ # of children
      ___ Less than one year ______ "
      ___ One to two years ______ "
      ___ Two to four years ______ "
      ___ Over four years ______ "
   c. Are the families two parent or one parent?
   d. Do any of the school age children have brothers or sisters in your care?
   e. How do people find out about you?

4. From whom do you usually get requests for care of school age children?
   a. What are the things which you most want parents to understand about the care you offer?
   b. What are the things that parents want to know?

5. Do you get many calls for school age care?
   a. Which age child do you like better - school age or younger children? Why?
   b. Is one age easier or more difficult than the others? Why?
   c. Have you always had school age children?
   d. Have you room for more school age children now? (Would you like more?)
   e. What is the oldest child you have ever had?
   f. What is the oldest child you would take?

6. What are the hours the school age children are here? A.M.____________ P.M.____________
   a. Do you take care of any children in the evening?
      Do you take care of children over the weekend?
      Do children stay overnight?
   b. Are you willing to take care of children whose mothers work irregular hours like weekends, swingshifts?

7. What do you charge for school age children?
   a. How much do you charge for younger children?

8. Do you serve meals or snacks to your school age children?
   Daily: Breakfast___, lunch___, dinner___, snack___.
   Sometimes, off and on: Breakfast___, lunch___, dinner___, snack___.

9. Can children stay in your home instead of going to school if they are ill?
   a. Do you ever take them to the doctor or dentist?
   b. (optional) How sick do children have to be before you refuse to take care of them?

(Program -- I'd like to know more about what school age children do in your home.)

10. Do the children have special chores or special things to do?

11. Do you take the children with you on errands or trips?
    a. What do you use for transportation?
    b. Do you have to get special insurance?

12. Do your children participate in after school activities, scouting or group activities?
    a. Do other children come here to play?
    b. Do your children play at homes of other children?
    c. Do they play in the neighborhood or parks on their own?

13. Do you have special things you like to do with the children? Do you celebrate holidays, birthdays, etc.?

14. How do the school age children get along with the younger ones?
    a. Are there any particularly good things that result from their being together?
    b. Are there any problems which their being together causes?

15. What are some of the typical things which your children do?
    a. How much time do they spend looking at television?
    b. Do children bring their own equipment and playthings?
    c. Are there rooms or areas where children may not go?

16. What kind of relationship do you have with the parents?
    a. Do you talk with them often? When?
    b. Do they ask for your advice or help? (About what?)
    c. Do you have any particular problems with parents?

17. Do you have any contacts with the school the children attend? (Do you contact them, or they, you? About what?)
    a. How do the children get to and from school?
    b. Do parents talk with you about school?
    c. Do you help children with homework?

18. How do you work it when you want to go on vacation, or when you are sick, or have errands or appointments?
    a. Do you have anyone to help you? (Paid or volunteer?)
    b. Do the children come when school is out for holidays? Summer vacations?

19. Have you an idea of what the cost to you of taking care of a school age child is, by the week (or month)?
    a. How much do you spend on food?_______, equipment_____, trips_____, other______________
    b. Do you know about taking income tax deductions for child care?

20. Have you ever taken or would you take care of children with special needs? (Physically or mentally handicapped?)

(Licensing -- I'd like to know more about your experience with licensing.)

21. How did you find out you have to be licensed?
    a. Do you find licensing helpful?
    b. How did you feel about the procedure?
    c. Do you have any ideas about how it might be changed?
    d. Do you remember what year it was that you got your license?
    e. If you had your choice, how many children would you care for?

22. How did you happen to begin doing family day care?
    a. Have you had experiences or training that have helped you to provide good care?
    b. Do you have someone you talk over your day care problems with?
    c. Do you have any children of your own? What ages?

23. What are the things you like most about doing family day care? What are the main difficulties?
    a. Is there anything you think the community should know about family day care? For school age children in particular?

24. Is there anything else you would like to tell me, or ask about the study? (please write on attached sheet).

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE -- TELEPHONE

For Mothers Who Have Preschool Children but no School Age Children in Care

Your experience as a licensed caregiver is important to us. Can you talk for a few minutes now? (If not -- when would be a time which is more convenient to you?)

1. How did you happen to get into day care?
    a. When did this occur? Year?

2. Can you tell me something about the families of the children you care for?
    a. Do they live near you? (Within walking distance)
    b. How long have they been with you?
        ____ 0 to 6 months ____ # of children
        ____ Less than one year ____ "
        ____ One to two years ____ "
        ____ Two to four years ____ "
        ____ Over four years ____ "
    c. Are the families two parent or one parent?
    d. Do you have more than one child in a family in your care? (i.e., brother and sister)
    e. How do people find out about you?

3. Do you have any children under the age of two?

4. Would you take school age children?
    a. Have you had school age children in the past?
    b. (If license won't permit) Would you if you could?

5. If you had your choice how many children would you like to care for?

6. How did you find out you have to be licensed?
    a. Did you find licensing helpful?
    b. How did you feel about the licensing process itself?
    c. Do you have any ideas about how it might be changed?
    d. Did you know you have to be licensed when you began taking care of children?

7. How do you work it when you want to go on vacation, or when you are sick, or have errands or appointments?

8. Do you have any children of your own? What ages?

9. Have you had experiences or training that have helped you to provide good care?

10. Do you belong to any kind of organization that is helpful in your day care work?

11. Do you have someone you talk over your day care problems with?

12. What are the things you like most about doing family day care? What are the main difficulties?

13. Is there anything you think the community should know about family day care?

14. Is there anything else you would like to tell me, or ask about the study?

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE -- TELEPHONE

APPENDIX A-3

For Mothers Who Have No Children in Care

Your experience as a licensed caregiver is important to us. Can you talk for a few minutes now? (If not, -- when would be a time which is more convenient to you?)

1. How long has it been since you have had children in your care?
2. How does it happen that you are not caring for children now?
    a. (If they don't want children ask) Why?
3. How did you usually get children?
    a. (If they can't get children ask) Why?
4. How did you happen to start caring for children?
5. How did you find out you have to be licensed?
    a. Did you find licensing helpful?
    b. How did you feel about the procedure?
    c. Do you have any ideas about how it might be changed?
6. Is there anything else you would like to tell me, or ask about the study?

SUMMER INTERVIEW -- TELEPHONE

APPENDIX A-4

A Follow-up Interview with Mothers Who Were Interviewed in Their Homes

1. Are the school age children who were with you in the spring still there?
    a. (If some left her care) Why were they taken out of care?
    b. Do you know what they are doing this summer?
    c. Do you have any new school age children?
    d. What do you expect your September caregiving to look like?
    e. Will the children be with you all summer?
2. Do any go to summer school?
3. What hours are the children at your house in the summer?
4. How do they get there?

(I'd like to know more about the kinds of things you do in the summer)

5. Could you tell me three things that the school age children did yesterday?

5+. Do you use community resources like city recreation programs? Which ones? (libraries, museums, other?)
    a. Do the children take swimming or other kinds of lessons?
    b. Do you plan anything special for them, like trips, campouts, or other activities which are different from winter?
    c. Do you require the school age children to have a rest or quiet time?

6. What do you charge in the summer? (Tie this in with question 7 on the home interview sheet)
    a. Do you have additional costs? (lunches, transportation, museum entrance fees, etc.)
7. Do you have to arrange for additional help in the summer?
    a. Do you have to change your routine?
8. What are the most difficult things about summer care?
    a. What are the best things?
9. Is there anything else about taking care of children that you would like to add or that we didn't ask you about?

ACTIVITY CHECK LIST

APPENDIX A-5

School Age Child's Name________________________________ Code:__________________

	What doing?	Who was there?	What were they using and where?
For example:	*swinging*	*alone*	*on tire swing in my neighbor's yard*
Another example	*watching TV*	*with John, baby and me*	*TV set in my son's room*
1st check Early afternoon			
2nd check Middle afternoon			
3rd check Late afternoon			

The project secretary will call you and may ask you some of the following questions:

1. Did you participate in any of the activities?
2. Did you provide the props or equipment?
3. How did the child get started in the activity?
4. How long did this activity go on?

RECORD CONTACT SHEET

APPENDIX A-6

Name:____ Code:________________

Address:______________________________________ Telephone________________

Licensed 0 - 6__________ ________

3 - 16__________________

3 - 17__________________

Letter mailed:________________________ Telephone contact made:____________________

Still caring for children:

Appointment made, date__________

Interview schedule
(green) #4 ______________

Not caring for children

Interview schedule
(pink) #3 ______________

Refused: Comments --

Call back:___ ____________________________

Interview completed_________

Thank you letter___________

Report follow up___________

Interviewer______________

LETTER TO LICENSED FAMILY DAY CARE MOTHERS

APPENDIX B

Dear

We are conducting a study of family day care arrangements for children in Los Angeles County, and hope very much that you will be interested in helping by providing information about the services you offer. The study is financed by the Office of Child Development, a branch of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in Washington, D.C., in an effort to help children and their families to receive good day care, and to assist caregivers such as yourself in providing it.

At Pacific Oaks we have been working with a group of family day caregivers in Pasadena which made us -- and hopefully the community -- aware of the tremendously important contributions they had to offer. We were particularly impressed with the quality of care -- as well as the *caring* qualities-- they demonstrated. Little is known about family day care, particularly *the really good things it can offer to families and children.* The main purpose of this study is to find out more about how family day care works, how women such as yourself began doing it, how you got your family day care children and the special pleasures or problems caregivers experience.

We are now eager to know how other caregivers spread out over a large area go about providing such services. Your name has been chosen at random, from a list of licensed persons made available by the Department of Social Services. However, this study is not connected with the Department of Licensing but rather with the Office of Child Development. In our experience, licensing requirements do not always account for the needs of children and families. Within the next week or so a member of our staff, Mrs. will be calling you. Please feel free to ask her any questions which you might have regarding this project.

We hope very much that you will want to help in our efforts to let others know about the important services family day care mothers such as yourself are providing. It is an opportunity, too, for you to let the public and governmental agencies know about the needs of caregivers.

Sincerely,

Research Director

TIMELY TAX TIPS

Tax Tips for Day Care Mothers

Direct Expenses Which Can Be Deducted

(Any cost relating to operation of a day care home.)

Day care mothers are urged to keep adequate records of all operating expenses. If possible, a separate account should be kept; if not, then receipts of all expenses should be kept. Direct expenses would include:

1. Food (estimate amount used, not including labor)
2. Toys and their repair
3. Car expenses on a mileage basis (12¢), e.g., transportation of children to school, purchasing supplies for day care use, etc.
4. Payment to substitute helpers
5. Operating supplies, such as paper cups, scissors, paints, paper
6. Special clothing used when caring for children; or damaged clothing
7. Advertising
8. Day care Liability Insurance

Indirect Expenses Which Can Be Deducted

If a certain part of the home is used only for day care (practically no personal use) the portion used (sq. ft.) can be divided by total square footage of the home excluding halls, bathrooms, furnace rooms, etc. If part of the home is used part of the time, the day care parents must additionally give number of hours used per year, days of week X 52 - 8760 (no. of hours in a year). This number X proportion of square footage used for day care gives you the percentage to be pro-rated. You now have percentage to apply to all indirect expenses :

1. Depreciation of house and furniture
2. Utilities (heat, electricity, water, trash, sewer charge).
3. House insurance (not day care liability, which is totally deductible.)
4. Cleaning
5. Repairs to house
6. Telephone

Depreciation Information:

1. Equipment and improvements to the home, used solely for day care, which exceeds $50. -- such as play yard equipment, fences, stair railings. Estimate how many years equipment will last, and divide cost by that number. The answer is how much you can write off each year.

2. House and furnishings used for day care and general living, excluding land, can be depreciated. For example:
   a $20,000 house - $5,000 land = $15,000.
   Use 40% for day care:
   40% of $15,000 = $6,000.
   $6,000 life of house (e.g., 25 years) = $240. to be written off.
   If furniture is depreciated over a life of say 10 years and cost $4,000
   40% of $4,000 - $1,600
   $1,600 ÷ 10 = $160 to be written off.

***

Tips for Parents Using Day Care Homes

This year, single parents or married parents who are working may deduct up to $400 per month for child care if their adjusted gross income does not exceed $18,000. This is a new ruling and should help many of the parents who use day care for their children. Above $18,000, deduction is reduced for each dollar over that maximum. Child care expenses are deductible if child is under 15 or physically or mentally unable to care for himself or herself. (For questions about the new rules, parents can call the Internal Revenue Service or check with their accountants.)

***

For additional help, two booklets are available at the Post Office and I.R.S. Office for $1.00. Your Federal Income Tax and Tax Guide for Small Business.

Compiled by WATCH (Women Attentive to Children's Happiness)
Pasadena, 1973.

APPENDIX D

SPACE RATING

1. Home being described is: house_______, apartment_______
   Home is single story_______, multiple story_____________

2. Size of home:
   1. _____ Very small, under 900 sq. ft.
   2. _____ Small, 900 - 1200 sq. ft.
   3. _____ Average, 1300 - 1800 sq. ft.
   4. _____ Large, 1900 - 2500 sq. ft.
   5. _____ Very large, 2600 or more sq. ft.

3. Size of outdoor yard area:
   1. _____ None
   2. _____ Limited
   3. _____ Average
   4. _____ Large

4. Neighborhood Resources
   1. _____ Virtually nothing -- no play areas, vacant lots available, libraries, etc.
   2. _____
   3. _____
   4. _____
   5. _____ Parks, recreation centers, good neighborhood play areas, etc.

5. Please answer whichever of the two following descriptions apply.
   1. Home has both a playroom and a living room: are adult expectations for children's behavior different in the two places?
      No_____, Yes_____, Describe:
   2. Home has no distinct playroom apart from living room: are adult expectations for living room behavior formal or restricted in some way?
      No_____, Yes_____, Describe:

6. Children's choice in where to be:
   0. _____ Don't know, can't tell
   1. _____ No choice by children; they all stay in a particular room or yard chosen by adult. They leave only to run errand or go to the bathroom, then return immediately.
   2. _____ Some choice; some rooms or yards may be off limits but children have free choice among remainder
   3. _____ High choice; children have freedom to move among all indoor and outdoor spaces (except for rooms in which someone may be sleeping)

7. Play equipment specifically provided for children (all ages) Rate on continuum:
   1. saw none_____________
   2. minimal amount__________
   3. average amount__________
   4. more than average______
   5. a great deal____________

8. List any equipment specifically designed for school age (pool table, ping pong, etc.)

9. Rate homes on the following dimensions. Use one or two ratings per dimension depending on what feels comfortable to you as a legitimate description of the structuring of the home both from space and mother.

   a. Formal _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ Informal

   b. Quiet _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ Noisy

   c. Clean _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ OK to be dirty

   d. Neat _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ Messy, space disorganized. "chaotic"